# VOX DEI

## Or the Great DUTY OF Self-REFLECTION upon a mans own wayes.

By N. WANLEY M.A. and Minister of the Gospel at Eby in Leicestershire.

*Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy Word.* Psal. 119. 9.

*I thought on my Wayes, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies.* Ps. 119. 59

—E cœlo descendit, γνῶθι σαυτὸν. figendum & memori tractandum pectore—*Juvenal lib. 4. Satyr. 11.*

Nescit pœnitenda loqui, qui proferenda prius suo tradidit examini. *Cassiod:*

*London*, Printed by *J. H.* for *M. Kimtoe*, at the *Fountaine* in *Pauls* Church-yard, 1658.

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TO THE
Right Honorable
MY
NOBLE LADY
DOROTHY
COUNTESSE
OF
Sunderland.

MADAM;

WHen I remember the place, your Ladyſhip doth deſervedly hold, in the formoſt ranks, of the moſt

*considerable persons in our* English Nation: *I am apt to think I have forgot my selfe, and that my presumption is unpardonable, when I am about to prefix a name so very eminent, to Essayes that cannot in Justice pretend to so much as a volume: But when withall I call to mind, how that stupendious Majesty, to which all earthly greatnesse must stoope; hath told* us, That if there be first a willing mind, it is by him accepted, according to what a man hath, and not according to what a man hath not: *I then begin to gather courage, because I cannot but conclude, that your* Ladyship *doth as nearely*

* 2 Cor. 8. 12.

*nearely reſemble God in his condeſcentions, as you doe in his Greatneſſe. And thoſe condeſcentions I find I have very great need to beſpeak; who am conſcious to my ſelf, that I tender to your* Lady-ſhip, *a preſent altogether as inconſiderable, as that of the Souldier to* Darius, *when he brought him a little water in his helmet. But when I perceive I am reduced to this troubleſome Dilemma, Either to ſin againſt Gratitude, or elſe to offer your* Ladyſhip *what is unworthy your peruſall: I doe eaſily determine to ſhun the firſt, (by what meanes ſoever while lawfull) and remit the reſt, to that candour, which*

*I am ſure is no ſtranger, to ſo true a Nobility, as your* Ladyſhip *hath derived, from ſo long a ſucceſſion.*

*I know your* Ladyſhips *eare will be ever open to this voice of God, which is the ſubject matter of our following diſcourſe: As better underſtanding then I am able to repreſent, that the Temptations of Greatneſſe riſe to a proportionable Magnitude with it ſelfe; That larger receipts demand the ſame meaſure in returnes; and that there is no diſtinction of Birth or place, can either plead an exemption from the commands of God, or ſhunne the appearance to account before his dreaded Tribunall.*

*nall. Which great account that your* Ladyſhip *may be able to render with* * Joy and not with Griefe; *That the welcome words of* * Come ye Bleſſed, (*from the mouth of the glorious Bridegroome of the Church*) *may be your* Ladyſhips *call unto an endleſſe Triumph; And that your* Ladyſhips *Coronet on earth, may be changed into an unvaluable Crowne of Glory in heaven, are the very earneſt and fervent deſires of his ſoule, who is*

* Heb. 13 17.

* Mat. 25 34.

MADAM,
*Your* Ladyſhips *to be commanded in Chriſt Jeſus,*

N. WANLEY.

# HAGGAI 1. 5.

*Now therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your Wayes.*

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THE distempers of the Soule are as numerous as the diseases which are incident to the Body; nor am I short of truth if I say they are much more

dangerous and mortall: But oh the folly and madneſſe which reigne in the moſt of men! when the Body languiſhes, when the vitall ſpirits are enfeebled, when the fleſh conſumes, yea perhaps when the moſt inconſiderable infirmity hath attach'd but one member, the Phyſitian is ſent for, his utmoſt skill is beſpoke, the head plots, the hand acts, the purſe payes, the tongue pleads, and all for a little corporall health:

But although the poyſon of corruption be ſpreading and begin to gnaw upon the very vitalls of the Inward man, though

a loathſome leproſie hath ſeis'd the ſoule; though a lethargick dulneſſe and ſtupidity invade it; though throughout there be nothing but * *wounds & bruiſes and putrifying ſores*; and though (which is moſt ſad, and Epidemicall) God himſelfe ſeemes to withdraw from it: Yet there are few or none, who ſearch after a timely diſcovery of the plague of their own hearts, or when diſcovered doe ſeriouſly addreſſe themſelves to put a ſtop to the encroaching malady, by the application of the moſt fit and appoſite Remedies.

* Iſa. 1. 6.

Yet if there be any who deſire

* Act. 26. 18. desire to be * turn'd from the power of Satan unto
* 1 Pet. 2. 9. God, from * Darkneſſe to light, from cloſe hypocriſie or open prophaneneſſe, to uprightneſſe and holineſſe; if any whoſe ſoules are under ſpirituall declen-
* Rev. 3. 2. ſions, would * *ſtrengthen the things ready to dye*; if any under ſpirituall lazineſſe, or formality in holy duties, would againe recover his ancient firſt vigour, and activity: If any deſerted would againe rejoyce in the beames of love and light, I ſay if any
* Pro. 8. 34. * *waite at the gates of wiſdome*, or at the dores of the great Phyſitian for the ends above remembred;

let

let them heare Wiſdomes Oracle, not folded up in ambiguous words, but pronounc'd in plaineſt termes; or take your Bibles and reade the written receipt of a Phyſitian indeed, and doubt not but through the bleſſing of him who is God bleſſed for ever; the very words of the Text containe both preparative, preventative, and curing Phyſick, which can be hurtfull to none, and cannot but be ſingularly uſefull to all. *Now therefore*, &c.

This Illative particle [ *Therefore* ] returnes us to ſomething which went before, and refers to verſe the

the second; *The time is not yet come, the time that the Lords house should be built*; this was the cry of the people; for having received a grant from *Cyrus* in his * first yeare, to returne to *Jerusalem*, and build the Temple, and having laid the *foundation thereof; the perfecting of the building was * interrupted by the adversaries of *Judah*, and *Benjamin*, and by the Edicts of the Persian King, who succeeded *Cyrus*, till the second yeare of *Darius Nothus*. So that deaded in their spirits by their former discouragements, the worke was forsaken by every hand, and the

* Ezra 1. 1. &c.

* Ezra 3. 8. &c.

* Ezra 4. 1. & 24.

the Temple left (as they ſay of *Cicero's* Tombe) *in vepretis*, ſcarce appearing above its own duſt; but low as it was, it was yet to lye, till they could bethink themſelves of ſome fit ſeaſon, wherein they might agree to build it; For the people ſaid, *the time was not come*, &c.

Now verſe the fourth, what the people did ſo confidently affirme, the Lord doth appear againſt, and doth aſſay their conviction, by an appeale to their conſciences. *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceil'd houſes, and this houſe lye waſt?* The time you think ſo very unfit, to raiſe this

this houſe from under its decayes ; you can judge meet enough, wherein to garniſh, and adorne your own. Behold your gallant way of reaſoning ; your very equall proceedings ; while your habitations like the proud Pallaces of Princes glitter in gold, the houſe of your God muſt lye in rubbiſh ; while your own dwellings are ceil'd and carv'd, pompous as wealth and wit can make them, mine muſt be a heap of ruines : you who call your ſelves my people, are not aſhamed to let this ſingle houſe lye waſt (which hath met with Reſpects from very Heathens)

thens) while your care and coſt extends to the whole number of your own.

*Now therefore*, &c.] As if he ſhould ſay, Now take the cauſe into your own hands, determine it amongſt your ſelvs, be your ſelves the Judges of your own ways; but before you paſſe ſentence, take time to conſider them. *Now therefore thus ſaith the Lord, conſider your Wayes.*

In theſe words we may obſerve theſe two things.

Firſt, Something impoſed upon us, as our duty to performe, [*Conſider your Wayes.*]

Secondly, Something to enforce us to the per-

for-

formance of this duty; [*Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts*] he who hath all the right to command us, demands our obedience; he who cannot put us upon any thing but what is equall, and honourable; he who is pleaſ'd to twiſt our beſt good with his own Glory; he who is Lord of Hoſts and can compell, where perſwaſions are ſucceſsleſſe; who can rigorouſly puniſh the cõtempt of his commands; It is he who calls us to this Duty. But of this hereafter as it ſhall occaſionally fall in, while we principally intend to inſiſt upon the Duty it ſelfe; wherein,

First,

First, An Act we are to put forth. [ *Consider* ]

Secondly, The object about which this Act of ours is to be conversant, [ *Wayes* ]

Thirdly, Direction of the Act to its proper object, by a Relative terme, [ *your* ]

It is an unpardonable oversight, to have travell'd the world, and yet as one speakes, to be ignorant of the *Isle of Man*, viz. our selves. To have a large acquaintance abroad, yet, strangers at home; or with those *Lamiæ* in *Ælian* to be critticall censurers of the blotts in other mens lives, yet dim-sighted and blind

blind as to our own. It is
*Pro. 17. 24. with the * *foole to have his eyes in the corners of the earth, while the Wiſemans are in his head*; or as our
*Math. 7. 3. * Saviour ſaith, to be fixedly intent upon anothers moate, while we overlook our own beame. Therefore the Lord would have us to know that herein *noſtra res agitur*, that not ſo much anothers as our own Wayes are they we muſt Conſider.

And ſo the Doctrinall Propoſition the Text preſents us with, is

Doct: *That it is every mans Duty to Conſider his Wayes.*

In the proſecution of which I ſhall obſerve this method. Firſt,

First, Shew what those Wayes are we must Consider.

Secondly, What it is to Consider our Wayes.

Thirdly, How or as to what we are to Consider them.

Fourthly, What speciall times call loudest for this Duty.

Fifthly, Why we must Consider our Wayes.

Lastly, Inferre something from the whole.

For the first of these; The scriptures make mention of a trheefold Way of Man.

The first is the way of the heart, mans purposes & intentions, his thoughts and

and Imaginations are his Wayes. *Gen. 6. 12. And God looked upon the Earth, and behold it was corrupt, for all fleſh had corrupted his Way upon the Earth.* Now if you look back to verſe the 5th, you there find what this Way was, *And God ſaw that the wickneſſe of man was great in the Earth, and that every Imagination of the thoughts of his HEART was onely evill continually.* The Prophet *David* alſo mentions a Way within, *Pſal. 139. v. 24. And ſee if there be any wicked Way in mee.* Now in the verſe before he diſcovers where that Way is, by the holy and pious

pious prayer he makes, *Search me, O God, and know my Heart.* Once more, *Eccleſ.* 11. *v.* 9. In the Wiſe mans Ironicall Conceſſion to unbridled youth, *Walke in the Wayes of thine own Heart.* Now what ever it is our thoughts dwell moſt upon, what ever takes up moſt roome in our hearts; what ever we (with the moſt ſeriouſneſſe, and the leaſt ſenſe of wearineſſe) addreſſe our Intentions to, plot for, or contrive to effect; Theſe plottings, deſignes, anxious and ſolicitous thoughts are our Wayes.

Secondly, The Way of the Tongue. The twofold

Way

Way of which Truth and falſhood are mentioned by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 119.29, 30. *Remove from mee the Way of lying*, and, *I have choſen the Way of thy Truth*. The Way of the heart is a private hidden path, a ſecret way, at which men or Devills can make but a conjecturall gueſſe; all the turnings and windings of which, are known to none, but him, who is both the maker and ſearcher of all hearts. But when thoughts get upon the Tongue, are cloathed with ſound, and become vocall, this is a more open diſcoverable Way. Now what ever it is wee doe moſt pleaſingly dif-

discourse upon, most frequently plead for, or conferre about these discourses, pleadings, conferings, are our Wayes.

Thirdly, The severall Acts of our lives and conversations are our Wayes. *Job* 34. 11. *For the Worke of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his Wayes.* The worke is the Way. The like we have, *Jer.* 18. 11. latter end, *Returne ye now every one from his evill Way, and make your Wayes and your Doings good.* Your Doings are your Wayes. These are the Wayes we are call'd upon to Consider; and surely respecting

the deplorable guilt which is upon us, which soever of these we do incounter; (while we scarce entertain a thought, which is not very vaine, or speak a word but is unseasoned *, or performe an Action, but is light in the ballance:) we have reason enough (the very best of us all) to cry out with holy [a] *Bernard*, *Lord deliver me from that wicked man my selfe*; and not trusting to our owne search (how industrious soever) implore the Lord to * *see if there be any wicked Way in us, and lead us to the Way everlasting.*

* Col. 4. 6

[a] *Horreo quicquid de meo est, ut sim meus. Domine libera me ab iniquo homine meipso.*

* Ps. 139. last.

Secondly, What is it

to

to Consider our Wayes; and this we shall endeavour to speak something to.

First, From the force of the translated Word, where it is elsewhere used, which we meet with, *Job* 11. 11. *For he knoweth vaine men, he seeth wickednesse also, will he not then consider it?* He knows, sees and will consider. It intimates that [1] God lookes weightily, judiciously and critically upon the world. Consider seems to import somewhat more then bare knowledge or sight. Many a man sees and knowes the way he walkes in, leads to the chambers of Death,

[1] Mr Caryl in Comment upon Job, upon the place.

and that the period of it will not only be the hazzard, but undoubted ruine of his precious soul, who yet doth not consider it; for a sleight superficiall knowledge, a transient passing sight, seperate or together, will not amount to consideration. The word is found. *Psal.* 37. 10. *For yet a little while and the wicked shall not be, yea thou shalt Consider his place, and it shall not be.* As if it had been said, though you have observ'd the wicked, in a very prosperous condition, flourishing as the greene bay; though you have sometime knowne, the place of his habitation eminent,

minent, ſurrounded with a large proſpect of his land; yet within a while, if you ſit downe to Mark, and ſeriouſly to Weigh all, you ſhall find no foot-ſteps of him remaining; no poore remainders of ſo plentifull an eſtate, as if what you ſaw before, was but preſented in a Land-skip, or the vaine Illuſion of an idle dreame, or ſomething which had a being in fancy but not in Nature.

Secondly, Something may be obſerved from the Originall words w^ch^ in this verſe are trāſlated *Conſider*, ſet your heart upon your wayes, as *Job* 2. 3.

שימו לבבכם על־דרכיכם

*Haſt thou conſidered, haſt thou laid my ſervant Job to thy heart:* to conſider is a heart-work. The Hebrew word here us'd for *heart* is very comprehenſive, as taking in [d] the mind, underſtanding, will and affections, the cogitation, ſtudy, councell, motion, and the very ſtrength of the heart and mind. So that when the Lord calls us to Conſider, he meanes wee ſhould make it the very buſineſſe of our whole ſoules, and doe it with all our might. The Reſult of all is, that to conſider our wayes, is Judiciouſly to obſerve, ſeriouſly to weigh, intenſely to regard, diligently

[d] Vid. *Leigh Critic: ſacra in verb.* לבב

gently to examine, to ponder, and meditate of them; to have a critticall insight into them, to have discerning apprehensions * about them, to bring them to our hearts, and our hearts to them. Yea and withall upon the fore-mentioned sight, and observance, a firme resolutiõ to correct their obliquity, by a serious endeavour of conformity to the straight evenneſſe of the Rule. For if we take the measure of this excellent and Christian duty of self-

* *Consideratio est quæ confusa discriminat, sparsa colligit, secreta rimatur, verum investigat, verisimile examinat, ficta & fucata explorat. Hæc est quæ agenda præordinat, acta recogitat, regit affectus, corrigit excessus, & vitam undiquaq; honestat.* Bernard de Considerat.

Reflection, as it lyes in the Definition, and as it is offered to us by a Reverend and late Authour, we shall easily perceive it extends to no lesse. To consider, saith he, Is an act of the practicall understanding, whereby it reflects, and stayes upon its own intentions, and comparing them with the Rule, proceeds to lay a command upon the will and affections, to put them in execution.

Mr. Trap in his Comment upon the small Prophets p. 473.

And thus are we arrived at the third particular propounded for explication of the Doctrine; which is,

*How or as to what we are to Consider our Wayes.*

And

And this I ſhall give you in foure heads; Conſider,

Firſt, Their Quality; of what nature are your Wayes, good or evil? Wayes of ſincerity and uprightneſſe, or wayes of hypocriſie and prophaneneſſe, the wayes of the juſt or unjuſt. *Iſai.* 26. 7. *The way of the Juſt is uprightneſſe*, what then is yours? There are foure notes whereby wee may diſcover, whether our wayes are, wayes of uprightneſſe; If ſo,

Firſt, You will ſet your ſelves not only againſt thoſe ſins which are more groſſe and appearing, but

alſo againſt thoſe which are more ſpirituall and leſs diſcernable. Some ſinnes there are which lye open to the eye and view of ſuch as we converſe with all in the world; others which none but God and our own hearts are privie to: ſome which like thoſe of *Mary Magdalen* fill a whole City with the fame of them; others, which being poſſibly committed within the privacy of a Cloſet, or ſevered from the groſſeneſſe of an externall act, doe eſcape the obſervance of any. Now againſt theſe of the former ranke, a principle of morall prudence is ſufficient

ent to engage a man, for while he is tender of his name, and that credit and repute which he hath acquired in the world; or while he is aw'd with the severity of the Lawes, he will not appeare an Adulterer or Theife, least he betray himselfe within the compasse of such rigours as will couple corporall punishment with shame and reproach. But it is a principle of a higher remark, which shall enable a man to sit as a severe Judge, and passe a condemnatory sentence, upon the haughtinesse of the heart, and the lewd dispositions of the soule, to the acting

acting of any thing unseemly. And to such proceedings as these the Apostle *Paul* exhorts all that pretend to Christianity, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *Having these promises, let us cleanse our selves from all manner of pollution both of flesh and spirit,* from the grosse observable pollutions of the flesh, and the lesse perceivable defilements of the spirit, and this is the way to perfect holinesse in the feare of God. The Pharisee could make his * boast before God himselfe, that his life was free from the notorious blots, and open filthinesse, which sullied the cõversations of others,

* Luk. 18 11.

yet

yet at the ſame time took no notice of the rank pride enthron'd in his ſoule, or that he placed ſo much of his confidence, in that Righteouſneſſe, he was ſo bold as to plead in the preſence of God: But the true candidate of heaven, will endeavour to purifie the heart, as well as purge the hand, and deales with his ſpirituall corruption as well as fleſhly; for hee knowes, though the one may make him more infamous among men, the other will render him as criminall in the ſight of God.

Secondly, You will be carefull to reſiſt ſin in its very

very infancy. The way of the juſt is to tread the Cockatrice in the egge, to ſtrangle corruption in the cradle, and reſiſt it in the very beginnings the eoſ; he thinks he ſhall be very diſloyall to God, as well as cruel to himſelfe, if he favour the growth and encreaſe of an enemy to both. He hath not given up himſelfe to the Lord, as *Naaman* with * reſerves, and therefore will not keepe a *Rimmon* to bow to. If ſin be ready to plead for it ſelfe, what *Lot* ſaid of * *Zoar, Is it not a little one?* he is as ready to

f *Mens dicata, ſic cavet minora vitia ut majora, quia a minimis incipiunt, quæ in maxima prorumpunt.* Bernard.

* 2 Kings 5. 18.

* Gen. 19 20.

to remember, It is yet a Serpent, although it be a young one. He knows he hath read in the Word of a * Cloud, whose appearance at its first setting forth was like that of a hands breadth, which yet before Time was growne much older, was reach'd and expanded to such a spacious vastnesse, as to become a curtaine to the wide compasse of heaven. Nor need he have recourse to any thing but his Reading and experience to informe him, what great fires rise from little sparks, what strong conflicts a drop of poyson will make with the soundest constitution,

* 1 Kings 18. 44, 45.

tution, or how much the little [g] *Remora* is able to contribute to the arrest of a ship, though befriended with the wind and Tyde. Therfore the Spouse of Christ, *Cant.* 2. 15. *Take us the little Foxes*, well knowing that little sins, if conniv'd at and indulg'd, would doe a great deale of harme; for while we give entertainment to a treacherous servant, and make him one of the family, who knowes to how many of his theevish confederates, he may set open the doores, or while we are tender of giving a repulse to

[g] *Navem prætoriam Antonij in mari Actio devinctā tenuit, ut & C. Principis ab Asturâ Antium remigantis.*

And the Poet. *Parva, Echeneis adest (mirum) mora puppibus ingens.*

to sin in its first addresses, we do not consider by what insensible* approaches it will gaine upon us, nor doe wee know when once wee are engag'd in the ascent, whether wee shall be able to desist before we be arriv'd at the very height of wickednesse. For no man doth at once, make such a shipwrack of his Innocence, as to become the chiefest of sinners, but it is through a graduall proceeding in those wicked arts that the soule at last comes to be array'd in scarlet, & crimson. There was a time when

* *Parit ira furorem,*
*Turpia verba furor, verbis ex turpibus exit*
*Rixa, ex hâc oritur vulnus de vulnere lethum.*
Palling. in Sagittar.

*2 Kings 8. 13. when * *Hazael* did abhorr
the thought of what i
proceſſe of time he di
not bluſh to doe, and ther
are, to whoſe once chaſ
eares a laſcivious word wa
the moſt unwelcome diſa
greeable ſound, who now
with *Quartilla*, or wha
other *Lais* may contend
for priority, who are a
laſt become the wonder o
themſelves, and with *Iphi-
crates* the Athenian Gene-
rall, are ready to cry out
(as he in the midſt of his
triumphs, they in the midſt
of their ſins) ἐξ ὅιων ἐις ὅ α?
from what to what? from
what modeſt beginnings
(comparatively) to what
bold and impudent pro-
ceedings,

ceedings, and thence to what dismall and fatall conclusions. And had the Prophet *David* strenuously oppos'd his sin at the first, when it betray'd it selfe in a wanton glance, he had not bedabbled his hands in the innocent blood of *Uriah*, after he had defiled his bed, nor clogg'd his Conscience, with so much guilt, as that river of teares wherewith he watered his Couch till it did * swimme, could never be able to expiate, nor entaild a sword upon his family to so long a succession of his posterity, nor been the deplorable instance, whereby to let others

* Psal. 6. 6.

thers understand, how fa
sin will improve its victo
ries, or how many folds o
the Serpent will follow
after he hath gotten en
trance for his head. It i
therefore the best and sa
fest to follow that Coun
cell which the Almighty
himselfe gives us, *Exod.* 23.
7. *Keep thee farre from an*
*evill matter, and shun th*
* Gal. 5. 13. *very* * *occasions and* * *ap*
* 1 Thes. 5. 22. *pearances of evill.* But if
we cannot keep it at so
desired a distance, but that
wee shall be sensible of its
stirrings and motions in
us: let us yet think it our
duty as well to seek to
dash in pieces the bratts of
*Edom*, as to enter the com-
bat

bat with ſons of *Anak*.

Thirdly, If our wayes be wayes of uprightneſſe; when we are employ'd in holy duties, we ſhall mind, not only the matter, but the manner we performe them in. Not only pray, but labour to doe it in faith and fervency, as thoſe which have a deep ſenſe of the neceſſities we are preſſ'd with, the burdens we groan under; the worth of thoſe precious ſoules we carry about with us; we ſhould put up ſtrong cryes, as thoſe that know while we are in this pilgrimage we have various and very potent adve ſaries to encounter, and as thoſe

thoſe who would intereſt
heaven in our quarrell, al
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bring nothing but weak ri
neſſe into the field; or
when we are met in the
Lords houſe to heare his
word, we ſhall labour to
doe it with affection and
zeale, with that raiſed neſſe
of ſoule, that thirſt and
ardour, thoſe allowable
tranſports, befitting the
reception of ſo ſweet an
Embaſſie, wherein the
heire of all things is pleaſed
to beſpeake our affections
for himſelf, and lets us to
know that (if we be wil-
ling) the nuptialls ſhall be
ſolemniz'd in the King-
dome of Glory. And as in
pray-

praying and hearing, so in all other duties, the Lord will be worshipped in *spirit and in Truth; but if we only tender the summe and number, in holy and religious services, without looking after uprightnesse, heate and vigour, life and strength in their discharge, this is not worshipping God in truth, but mocking the Almighty with a vaine show. For externalls in Religion, the labour of the lip and lungs, are but dead carcases, if separate from that holy frame and temper of soule, which is as it were, the very forme to animate and give life to them.

* Joh. 4. 23.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, If your waye
be wayes of uprightneſſe
you will not take up wit
any meaſure of Grace al
ready attain'd. This wa
the way of the great Ap
ſtle of the Gentiles. *Phi*
3.13,14. *But this one thin*
*I doe, forgetting thoſe thing*
*which are behind, and reach*
*ing forth to thoſe thing*
*which are before, I preſſ*
*toward the mark, for th*
*prize of the high calling i*
*Chriſt Jeſus* As to thes
temporal & terrene thing
moſt men are poſſeſſ
with an unſatiable Drop
ſie, [b] or a kind of Doglik
appetite, the more the
have, the more they de
ſire; ſuch as have heaped
up

[b] *Creſcit Amor nummi quantum ipſa pecunia creſcit.*

up to themſelves ſo much wealth, as if they meant to vye with both the *Indies*, yet know no place, where to erect their *Ne plus ultra*. Or ſhew us the man whom the world believes* ſatiate with honours, and but glutted with pleaſures, and we will build him a ſtatue, and receive him as no leſſe then a prodigy. We reade of an *Alexander* weeping he could extend his Conqueſts no further then this one world, and labouring for breath, as if he were pent up in too narrow a roome. Of another

* *Metiri me Geometres docet latifundia; potius docear, quomodo metiar quantum homini ſit ſatis.* Sen. Epiſt. 88.

*Unus Pellæo juveni non ſufficit orbis.*

*Æſtuat infelix angusto limite mundi, ut Gyaro clauſus ſcopulis, parvâq; Seripho.* Juvenal ſat. 10.

ther who railes at Nature, and quarrells with the ſhortneſſe of mans life, as ſufficing only to tempt the appetite with a taſt of pleaſure. What ſhall theſe fanatick fooliſh things, calculated for a day, which periſh in the uſing, wrack and tenter our deſires to a reſtleſſe, and unſatisfied longing, while we are contented to fit downe with the meaneſt attainments of Grace. Shall we with *Otho* in *Tacitus* (*projicere oſcula, adorare vulgus, & omnia ſerviliter pro imperio*) thinke all the unworthy methods of purſuite too few, to gaine a ſmall portion of earthly things;

*Tacit. Annal. ab excessu Neronis lib.*

when

when yet in our accounts a faint & languiſhing wiſh is a prodigal expence, though it might help to land us at heaven? let us rather learn of that gallant Heathen, [k] to trample on that paultry traſh, and deſpiſe thoſe beggarly riches, which ſparing waſts, and ſpending looſes; and take up a more legitimate thirſt, after ſuch as will run a line paralell with the Immortality of our ſouls. It was *Paterculus* his character of [l] *Cato*, that he was a man, that carried a neare reſemblance to vertue it ſelfe, and may it not ſhame our dull deſires after Grace?

[k] *Pythagoras.*

[l] *Homo virtuti quam ſimillimus & rigidæ innocentiæ.* lib. 2do.

Heroick *Cæſar* [m] could not beare a man before him, in his ambitious courſe, and he thought nothing don while any thing was to doe; and may it not ſerve to rouz up the ſleeping courage of a ſtationanary in the Chriſtian race? Wee are modeſt even to wickedneſſe, while herein we ſuffer all to goe before us; but it is a very becõing practice, to tranſlate into our own lives, what ever we ſee fairly writ in anothers; and the contention is yet more noble, where it is no: only for emulation but victory. For while we remember that he who hath

[m] *Nec jamſerre poteſt Cæſarvè priorem Pompeiuſvè parem—— Credere nil actum dum quid ſupereſſet agendum.*

hath ſet *barres to the Sea, and ſaid, *Hitherto ſhalt thou come and no further*, hath yet ſet no ſtint or limit to a Chriſtian in his holy courſe; and while we doe conſider at what an almoſt incredible diſtance the very greateſt examples of piety, are from perfection, how far the fleeteſt arrow drops ſhort of the mark; we cannot but conclude there is roome enough for the beſt of our endeavours; and that where God hath not bounded us with limits, we ought not to ſet any to our ſelves. That advice of the [n] Heathen

* Job 38. 10.

[n] *Semper tu hoc facito, cogites, id optimum eſſe, tute ut ſis optimus; ſi id acquiveris, ſaltem ut ſis optimis proximus.* Plaut. Trin. Act. 2.

may be whiſper'd in the eare of any Chriſtian, ever think it beſt to be the beſt, that if the ſucceſſe anſwer not thy deſire, thou mayeſt at leaſt be the next to him that is ſo; as it is with thoſe who deſigne the attainment of the Philoſophers ſtone, though their hotteſt purſuite, and moſt accurate ſearch, cannot diſcover where it is, that ſo admirable Elixar lurkes, yet they meet with many choice and exquiſite ſecrets by the way, and thoſe medalls at the ſame time, both tempt them to think there is a mine, and withall are the ſweet rewards of their former paines.

Be-

Beſides, wee muſt know that although divine approbation doth accompany the meaneſt, the loweſt degrees of grace; yet they are thoſe higher meaſures, which are crown'd with Encomions, and which are attended with the greateſt gloryings and boaſtings in God. Methinks this very laſt conſideration ſhould be enough to bring us into a kind of [o] diſpleaſure, with what we are at preſent, that if poſſible that very diſpleaſure may be to us in ſtead of a pulley, to wind us up to a greater height. Conſider the Quality of your Wayes.

[o] *Semper tibi diſpliceat quod es, ſi vis pervenire ad id quod non es, ſi dixeris ſufficit periiſti. Auguſt.*

Secondly, Wee muſt Conſider the Tendency of our Wayes. *Anima quo tendis?* is a good Queſtion, and frequently to be put; Whither tend you, to ruine and Deſtruction, or to peace and felicity? It is a matter of no triviall conſequence to underſtand, to what haven we are bound, & to what period the way we are at preſent in, will at laſt bring us. Now leaſt we ſhould be deceived in a caſe ſo important, the Holy Ghoſt hath ſet a black brand upon ſome Wayes, that eve y foote might ſhun them, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *Know you not that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the*

*the Kingdome of God? Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolators, nor Adulterers, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdome of GOD.* What a dreadfull Eccho have these last words, *shall not inherit the Kingdome of God?* The Apostle ushers in the whole with a *be not deceived*, intimating how too too apt we are to be gull'd and abused in things of this nature. For not only sin it selfe is deceitfull,* but the sinners heart is so also, * and hereby it comes to passe, that we are not so much imposed

* Heb. 3. 13. * Jer. 17. 9.

upon, through the ſpecious pretences, faire appearances, or fallacious inſinuations of ſin, as becauſe we will have it to be ſo; that we are betray'd, is becauſe our ſelves are conſpiratours * in the treaſon; and that we are bound and enſlav'd, wee ought not to impute it ſo much to the force of Temptations, as to our own follies, who * *Samſon*-like have not been able to be ſo faithfull to our ſelves, as to conceale where lay our ſtrength. We are wilfully deafe, deafe as Adders

* *Non eſt quod cuiquam noſtram ad ſcribamus ærumnam niſi voluntati: Nemo noſtrum teneatur ad culpam, niſi voluntate propriâ deſl. xerit. Voluntarium ſibi militem eligit Chriſtus, voluntarium ſervum ſibi Diabolus auctionatur.* Ambroſ. de vit. beatâ.

* Judg. 16. 17.

ders to the positive declarations of the Word, and though it thunder out a woe to the oppressour, and tell the Drunkard, There is death in the pot; though it informe the Reviler his * *Religion is in vaine*; and the Adulterer that he cancells his claime to the heavenly inheritance; though it let us to know that these severall wayes have a direct tendency to everlasting ruine, that they are such as will infallibly lay the soule under the just wrath of an incensed God; that whosoever hath a foote in such paths (if he make not a speedy and seasonable returne) shall doubt-

* James 1. 26.

doubtlesse fall into such a precipice, a pit so fatally deepe, that thence there are no returnes: yet are we so bruitish as to preferre our own conceptions, before what ever it can say; and to gratifie the lustings of our flesh, to the apparent hazzard of our precious soules. When the Senatours of *Rome* enter'd the Senate-house, they were remember'd of their duty, by a such like Inscription over the doore, *See the Common-wealth take no lack*; it would not be amisse if when we are about to begin an action, or engage in any Way that is new, we have the same cares

*NE quid detrimenti Respub. capiat.*

cares for our ſoules; and the rather becauſe no Republique is ſo long liv'd. We are nicely tender of our bodies, which yet are but the ſlaves of Death, but carcaſſes of the Man, and we are not willing to expoſe them to a guſt of aire, when we think it may prejudice our health; let us be as apprehenſive of the dangers of the ſoule, and proceed with the like heedfull Cautions, ſince in the neglects of that, we are moſt properly ſaid to neglect our [q] ſelves. Conſider the Tendency of your Wayes.

[q] *Qui corpus negliget, ille non ſe, ſed fragile caducumq; domicilium, at qui animam, ille ſe verè negligit.* Cicero.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Consider the ſutableneſs of your wayes; and this in four reſpects.

First, How they ſuite with Gods diſpenſations to his Church and people. When *Iſrael* was in the field, and the Army expos'd to all the injuries of the weather, and hardſh ps of the Camp; va'iant *Uriah* could not think it meet for him alone, to taſt the otherwiſe allowable delights, and warrantable conveniences of his houſe.

* 2 Sam. 11. 11.

When good * *Nehemiah* (though a favourite at Court) did but heare the Tragicall newes of *Jeruſalems* deſolatiõs, he could not but entertaine them with

* Nehem. 1. 3, 4.

with a face ſo ſad, and a countenance ſo ſolemne, as the King was able to reade the trouble of his mind, in the paleneſſe of his viſage; when the Prophet *Iſaiah* * was about to foretell the day of treading downe in the *valley of viſion*, the day of trouble and perplexity from the Lord God of Hoſts; he thinks it reaſon ſufficient to break forth into thoſe paſſionate and pathetick expreſſions, *Look away from mee, I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort mee*, &c. But there wanted this ſuitableneſſe in the King and his favourite, *Eſth.* 3. 15. And it is very obſerva-

* Iſai. 22. 4, 5.

ble

ble what speciall notice the holy Ghost took of it: The words are, *So the King and Haman went in to drink, [But] the Citie Sushan was perplexed*; why, was this a matter so strange, a thing which no age had heretofore been acquainted with, for a King and his favourite to drinke together? No sure, nor was that the matter; no doubt but *Haman* who enjoy'd the monopoly of his Princes favour, who was the very Idoll of the Court for every knee to bow to, then whom (besides himselfe) *Ahasuerus* his hundred and twenty Provinces knew not a greater

greater man; I say, no doubt but he had more then once receiv'd the like favour, nor was he culpable in it, so long as he kept within the bounds of moderation and Temperance, with respect to the season; but for them to doe it at such a time, to carowse then, to allow themselves in mirth and jollity, when *Sushan* was perplex'd, when their hearts were heavie, and the souls of the Lords *people clave to the dust; this is the blame. The like emphaticall [ But ] you have, *Amos* 6, 5, 6 verses, *That drink wine in bowles, that anoint themselves with the chiefe ointments, stretch them-*

* Ps. 119. 25.

*themſelves upon beds of Ivory, and invent to themſelves inſtruments of muſick like David,* [*But*] *they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joſeph.* Indeed it is ſad for men *Baruch* * like to ſeek great things for themſelves, when God is laying waſt, plucking up what he had planted, and pulling downe, what he had built. When the * *Lion roares the beaſts of the forreſt tremble*; when one ſchollar is whipt the reſt quake; when a houſe is on fire, each of the neighbours is in fear of his own; when others ſuffer, it becomes not us to be altogether unſenſible, to have

* Jer. 45. 5.

* Amos 3. 8.

have no touch of compaſſion towards them in diſtreſſe, for we know not how ſoon the ſcourge may overtake us, and thoſe ſorrowes we would no wiſe reſent while they were others, we may have time enough to lament as our owne. Sure Chriſtians ſhould be perſons of publique ſpirits, and as members of the ſame body, ſhould have a ſimpathy and fellow-feeling of the calamities and afflictions of their Brethren. He who is the head of the Body profeſſes his deep ſenſe of their ſufferings, * *In all their afflictions I was afflicted*: and the Apoſtle *Paul*,

* Iſa. 63. 9.

* 2 Cor. 11.29. *Paul*, * *Who is afflicted, and I burne not.* I confesse i it be a glasse eye, or wooden legge, we doe no wonder if it have no sens of what the true member of the body suffer; but i we be reall Christians; *I*

* Ps.137. 6. *I forget * thee, O Jerusalem, then let my tongue cleave to the roofe of my mouth,* and my right hand forget to feele the beate of musicks pulse, in its many sweete and melodious accents.

Secondly, Consider how your wayes, suite with Gods wayes towards you. Hath the Lord given you many and great talents? Are you set up as so many

living

living monuments of mercy? Have you been the subjects of many unexpected preservations, strange deliverances? Have you been seated under variety, excellency, continuance of meanes of Grace? O then what fruit, what suitable returnes for such plentifull receipts? what answerable emprovements have been made of so numerous mercies? When *Ahasuerus*, a Heathen Prince, had heard the story of *Mordecai's* faithfulnesse, and loyalty read, he could not passe it over, without enquiring what hath been done * to *Mordecai* for this? When we recount with our selves

* Esth. 6.

how

how much grace & goodneſſe, the bounty of Heaven hath richly diſpenced, to us and ours, paſt and preſent; in common gratitude, the ſame inquiries ſhould be made, and we ſhould demand of our ſelves, what hath been don to the Lord for this? otherwiſe we fruſtrate his expectations, who lookes for ſomething of a harveſt, where he hath been a liberall ſower. When *Iſai.* 5. 2. he had fenced his Vineyard, and gathered out the ſtones thereof, and planted it with the choiceſt Vine, and made a Wine-preſſe therein; he looked that it ſhould bring forth grapes; when

when the Lord hath ſet a hedge of protection and preſervation about us; when his bowells have bin no way ſtreightened towards us, but his favours renewed upon us every morning and moment; he waites for ſomething from us that may ſome way anſwer his care and coſt. Thus when we are brought into marveilous * light, it is that we might ſhew forth the praiſes, vertues, perfections, of him who called us thereunto; and when we are brought into the * liberty of the Sons of God, it is intended we ſhould be ſo far ſenſible of that freedome, as not to veild

* 1 Pet. 2. 9.

* 1 Pet. 2. 16.

yeild our ſelves ſervant
and ſlaves to the luſts o
our ſelves or others. Bu
if in Goſpel times we liv
in the practice of ſuch ſins
as very Heathens woul
bluſh at, if we ſtumbl
then, when truth is at he
high noone, and fall fowl
* Luk. 1. 78. when the day ſpring*from
on high hath viſited us
this is to be guilty of
baſeneſſe which elſwher
we paſſe very ſevere Cen
ſures upon, and which we
are not able to pardon in
our fellow-creatures, while
we thinke we are defrau-
ded of that profit which
we might in juſtice have
expected. Thus when we
ſee a tree planted in a fer-
tile

tile ſoile, ſpreading forth its roots in the fatteſt earth, and ſet by the * rivers of water, whoſe empty branches are only cloathed with leaves, wee ſay that ungratefull Trunk mocks the care of its induſtrious owner, and demands the Axe. Or if wee meet with the leaneneſſe of * *Pharaohs* kine, upon thoſe which are kept in the greene and choiceſt paſtures; are we not very [1] querulous, and ready to poure out our complaints into every eare we doe encounter? What is this but out of our own mouths to judge our ſelves? and indeed if we find the ſame

* Pſal. 1. 3.

* G. n. 41 19.

[1] *Hei mihi quam pingui macer eſt mihi taurus in arvo.* Virg.

unfruitfull leaneneſſe upon us, though ſeated in the ſame advantages, why ſhould wee be ſo partiall as not to paſſe the ſame Cenſure upon the ſame cauſe?

Thirdly, Conſider Chriſtians, how your Wayes now, ſuite with your firſt Wayes, your firſt actings of Grace. When firſt the Lord burſt the ſhackles of your ſpirituall bondage; when the fetters of that diſmall Captivity were newly fallen off, when your feete which ſtuck faſt in the mire, were by the ſignall kindneſſe of the Lord free'd thence; when from a dungeon of thick dark-

darkneſſe, you were firſt cald into marvellous light; when the ſenſe of Gods loving kindneſſe lay freſh upon your ſoules; in theſe firſt breakings forth of light, you were like the fountain of the [s] Sun warme at leaſt with love; but why alſo like unto it, ſhould your coldneſs grow as the light increaſes? At your firſt ſetting forth you ran to purpoſe, then what was it, could impaire the eſteeme of Chriſt in your hearts? With that brave ſpirited Knight in [t] *Thua-*

[s] *Apud Jovis Hammonij Templum, fons erat aquam ſolis vocabant, quæ ſub lucis ortum, tepida manabat, medio die frigidiſſima.* Q. Curtius. lib. 4.

[t] *Ludovicus Marſacus*, a *French* Knight, (going with others to execution, yet in reſpect of his dignity, not bound as they with a chaine) is ſaid to cry

out to him who bound them, *Cur non & mihi quoq, torque donas & insignis hujus ordinis militem creas?* Thuan. Hist.

*nus*, you counted ſuffrings for Chriſt a new addition to your honours; while you were as ambitious of the chaine, as others to be brethren of the order of the *George*, or to ſhare in the forraine dignities of the *Golden fleece*. Was it not your ſole griefe, the very anguiſh and trouble of your ſpirits, that you could love CHRIST no more, ſerve him no better? You could then ſay of the worlds allurements, as *Socrates* refuſing *Alcibiades* his (almoſt royall) preſents; Even poor *Socrates* hath

[u] *Et nobis noſtra eſt ambitio.*

hath his Ambition; or as *Plato* to the *Muſitians, Philoſophers can dine and ſup without you.* I beſeech you Chriſtians recall it to mind, was there not a day, and was not that the time, when your hearts were ready to Eccho back to every precept? when you thought the pikes of no perill, too ſharpe to run upon for Chriſts ſake? when you were well ſatiſfi'd, to have your credit cropp'd, your reputation injured, your goods ſpoil'd, your perſons ſacrificed, and your blooming beauties (with *Spurina* in *Ambroſe*) expoſed to the violences of your own hands;

when any of these should hinder the shine of Christ? What holy fires then flamed in your brests, what a * constraining power then had the love of Christ in you? many waters *could not quench it, no not allay it. How is it then that * *Ephesus*-like, you have left your first love? How comes it to passe that your Quondam activitie and strength in spiritualls, is thus cramp'd and benummed, and that spirituall lazinesse, and debility, succeed in their places? Or that your former Gloryes like x *Julians* are sullyed with your present walke? while your affections are divided

* 2 Cor. 5. 14.

* Cant. 8. 7.

* Rev. 2. 4.

x *Dissimulatione suâ multiplices gloriæ cursus obnubilavit.* Ammian. Marcell.

divided betwixt Christ and the world; those for Christ are scarce warme, which before such division rose to a flame; they run now in as low a channell as the River *Lee* [y] is said to doe, upon King *Alfreds* division of it, boats could scarce swim, where ships of burden used to ride. Brethren, having begun in the spirit, why tend you towards an end in the flesh;* *You ran well*, and as the * Apostle, *who hindred you?* or what [z] *Eringium* have you since eaten? Have you therefore forgotten the Lord Jesus, be-

[y] *Fullers holy state.*

*Gal. 3. 3

* Gal. 5. 7

[z] *Hanc herbã una capra in os sumens totum gregem quasi subsistere cogit, tantisper dum accedens caprarius eam eximat.* Sphinx. Philosoph.

cauſe he remembred you? or in that little progreſſe you have made in the wayes of holineſſe, have you met with any thing of fraud and coſenage, which might indeed cauſe you to repent of your former forwardneſſe? Say I pray you, is not the ſervice of Jeſus Chriſt, the continuall feaſt of a good conſcience; the reſting under the eye and ſmiles of the King of Heaven, as profitable, pleaſant, as ſweetly delicious as they have been repreſented to you? By the taſt you have had of thoſe few cluſters *(a ſampler of the fruits of the land) are you able to bring an evill report

* Numb. 13. 23.

report upon that, which is indeed ſo good? After having ſipt of the fountaine *of living waters, is it poſſible for you to ſay they are brackiſh, and unpleaſant. After having enjoyd ſomething of the preſence of Chriſt, and walk'd ſome turnes with the King in the * Galleries, are you ſo farre prejudiced as to conclude, there is not that forme and * comelineſſe, that grace and ſweetneſſe in him that you ſhould ſo ſtrongly deſire him, as heretofore you have don? Methinks I heare the Lord ſpeaking to you, as once to *Iſrael*, * *O my people, what have I done unto thee,*

* Jer. 2. 13.

* Cant. 7. 5.

* Iſa. 53. 2.

* Mich. 6. 3.

*and wherein have I wearied thee? teſtifie againſt*
* Iſa. 43. 26. *mee; put me in* * *remembrance; let us plead together; declare that thou mayeſt be juſtified.* As if he ſhould have ſaid, What is it that hath rebated the edge of your once eager deſires? Since at the firſt your driving was like
* 2 King. 9. 20. that of * *Jehu* the ſon of *Nimſhi*; what is it that hath clogg'd your Chariot wheeles? Since you were once in the wayes of righ-
* 2 Sam. 2. 18. teouſneſſe, ſwift as * *Aſahel*;
* 2 Sam. 20. 12. what murdered * *Amaſa* wallowing in his blood, have you encountered upon the way? whereby you are arreſted in your haſt,

and

and ſtand as ſtill, as if with *Lots* wife, your limbs were ſtiffned into a * pallar of ſalt, or your feet chang'd into roots, had fix'd you to the earth in the likeneſs of trees. Have I preſſ'd you to impoſſible things? Have I layd burthens upon your ſhoulders, beyond what your ſtrength is * able to bear? Have the very meaneſt of your ſervices, met with diſproportionable rewards? or have I not even prevented your very wiſhes, & been more forward to beſtow, then your ſelves have been ready * to aske? Well Chriſtians, if any ſhall caſt their eyes upon this page, who

* Gen. 19 26.

* 1 Cor. 10. 13.

* Joh. 16. 24.

who have unbent their endeavours, or ſlackned of their former diligence in the wayes of piety, let them gird * up the loines of their minds; remember whence they are * fallen, and doe their firſt workes.

* 1 Pet. 1. 13.

* Revel. 2. 5.

Fourthly, Conſider how your Wayes ſuite with your hopes. Have you not a Crowne of Glory * in your eye? Are you not in expectation, that when theſe *tabernacles of clay, your bodies, are crumbled into duſt, you ſhall have a * houſe, not made with hands, a building, the authour and maker whereof is God? Is not your ambition directed at ſuch things,

* 1 Pet. 5. 4.

* 2 Cor. 5. 1.

* 2 Cor. 5. 1.

things, as * *eye hath not* * 1 Cor.
*seene, nor eare heard, nor* 2. 9.
*hath entred into the heart*
*of man to conceive:* Tell me
if your aspiring thoughts,
if your towring hopes, doe
not contend to make per-
petuall felicity their prey;
and if you have not alrea-
dy made a promise to your
selves of the undisturbed
possession of something
too great for your hopes?
And what are not all these
powerfull enough, to en-
gage you to a circumspect
life and conversation? Is
not Heaven, and all there-
in, a full recompence for
all your paines? or is a
poore low carnall walke,
any thing suitable, to a
high

high ſpirituall heavenly reſt? while we remember, the pleaſures there, which are ſtrangers to death, [a] thoſe Joyes and that felicity which are ever greene, while wee thinke upon that happy company of Apoſtles, Prophets, and Martyrs, wth whom wee hope to be fellow-cõmoners unto all eternity: theſe hopes me-thinkes ſhould have ſome influence upon our lives, that while wee have ſo much of heaven in our minds, we ſhould not aſſay to graſpe ſo much of earth with

[a] *Qualis illic cœleſtium regnorum voluptas ſine timore moriendi! Quam ſumma et perpetua felicitas! Illic Apoſtolorum glorioſus chorus; Illic prophetarum exultantium numerus: Illic Martyrum innumerabilis populus ob certaminis, et paſſionis victoriam coronatus.*

Cyprian: de Mortal.

with our hands. For you who can gaze on the heavens, and count them yours, who having a title to Christ, cannot want one to any thing besides, which is good: why should you suffer your thoughts, to lose themselves, in the contemplation of a wilderness world? When *Augustus* [b] observed some Embassadours sporting with dogs, he enquired if there were no women in their Country; when the men of the world observe you so fervent in the chase of earthly pleasures, or so restlesse in the pursuite of the vaine and flitting shadowes of this transitory world:

[b] *Leigh.* Choyce observations.

world: They will conclude, that children-like, you run after these bubbles, because you know no better; or when they see you to * Lam. 4. 5. embrace a * dunghill, who pretend to have been brought up in scarlet, if they finde you moyling like slaves in the drudgeries of this world, who say you have a reall title to a Kingdome in the next: with [c] *Augustus* in *Josephus*, they will be able to discerne the counterfeite from the Prince, by the brawne in his hand. The * Apostle when he represents to Christians what they at present are, and what for the future they may

[c] *Josephus* Jewish Antiquit: *lib.* 17. *cap.* 14.

* 1 Joh. 3. 2, 3.

may expect to be, tells us alſo what an influence theſe apprehenſions will have upon the converſation; *Beloved* (ſaith he) *now are we the ſons of God, and it doth not yet appeare what we ſhall be; but wee know, that when he ſhall appeare, we ſhall be like him: for wee ſhall ſee him as he is; and every man that hath this hope in him, purifies himſelfe, even as he is pure.* He that hopes to raigne with God in heaven, will be very carefull to * walke with God upon earth. He that expects to participate with Chriſt in his Glory, will endeavour to reſemble him in his purity. He that

* Gen. 5. 22.

that hath the Crowne in his eye, will not be ashamed to goe forth with his crosse upon his shoulders; * Heb. 12. 2. But for the * Joy that is set before him, despises the shame, while he is resolved as well to trace his Master in his sufferings, as to sit downe with him in his Triumphs. Thus you see we must consider the Quality, Tendency, suitablenesse of our wayes, and

Fourthly, Consider if your wayes be such as you * 2 Cor. 5. 10. would gladly be found in at the last day, the day of Judgement. *We know* * *we*

Quotics de die judicij cogito, totus corde & corpore contremisco. Siqua præsentis vitæ est lætitia, ità agenda est, ut nunquam amaritudo futuri Judicij recedat a memoria. Hieronym.

*must*

*muſt all appeare before the Fudgement-ſeate of Chriſt, to give an account of all things done in the body, whether good or evill.* And truly I am apt to think, the verieſt drunkard in a Pariſh, would not then be found tipling on an Ale-bench. That the moſt frequent, and prodigious ſwearer, would not then be taken with an oath in his mouth. Say, you who ſcorne the Meſſage and Meſſengers of Chriſt; you who * grind the faces of the poore; you who know you embrace but a ſhew of Religion, while you are hypocrites in your hearts; you who cry downe puri-

* Iſai. 3. 15.

ty

ty and preciſeneſſe; you who prophane Sabbaths, abuſe creatures, act the Devills part in tempting others to ſin, and drawing them to wickedneſſe: At that day, when the hea-
* 2 Pet. 3. 12. vens ſhall * melt, the earth paſſe away, the trumpet ſhall ſound, the dead ariſe;
* Matth. 25. 6. and the * voice ſhall be heard, that *the Bridegroome is come*: Tell me, I ſay, would you then be found living in the forementioned courſe; or rather praying, reading, reſiſting Satan, conquering corruption, acting grace, and living holily. The Apoſtle *Paul*
* Phil. 3. 9. * tells us his deſire, how he would be found at that day,

day, and how not. *And be found in him* (saith he) that is, in Christ) *not having mine own righteousnesse, which is of the Law.* Yet in the foregoing verses, * he had said, that *he was touching the righteousnesse which is in the Law blameleſſe:* No man could say (as the Proverb hath it) *black was his eye*; no man could touch him with the breach of the letter of the Law; no man could tell *Paul*, he was guilty of a grosse scandalous sinne, and prove it. And what durst he not yet be found at that day in this righteousnesse? No, he knew men were too superficiall in

* Vers. 6.

in their expoſitions of the Law; and much more ſuperficiall in their obſervance of it. He knew that the blear and partiall eyes of man would over-look many things; which yet ſhall not eſcape the ſight and ſentence of him who is incomparably the moſt juſt and diſcerning Judge. Now if this bleſſed Apoſtle found in his very beſt righteouſneſſe, in his whiteſt innocency, ſomething which he did not dare to ſtand to; where ſhall you be able to appeare, who from your tender Infancy, have been employ'd in the drudgeries of Satan? whoſe ſins (being unrepented of)

ſhall

ſhall at that day, attend you in their crimſon liveries, and be rendred hainous indeed by all the aggravating circumſtances, whereby ſin is capable of being made exceedingly *ſinfull. Souls do you not tremble at the thought of your ſummons? Doe you not ſhiver at the remembrance of your appearance, when full of guilt as you are, you ſhall be dragg'd before ſuch a Tribunall as is fatall to [d] guilt? A day of gloomy darkneſſe, will that be to all impenitent ſinners; a day that ſhall preſent their eyes with nothing

* Rom. 7. 13.

[d] The Tribunall of *L: Caſſius* ſayth *Valerius Maximus* was *Piorum Rupes*; *Reorum Scopulus.*

thing but * frightfull objects. A day wherein the faces of * great ones (if wicked) shall gather blackneſſe, wherein the cry shall be to the * *mountaines fall on us, and to the hills hide us from the face of the Lambe, that sits upon the Throne*; A day wherein you shall wish to runne from your selves; to be hid in the Center of the earth; to be return'd into the bosome of your first causes; wherein you shall hate your being, but shall not be able to shake it off; wherein all refuges shall

* *A dextris erunt peccata accusantia, a sinistris infinita Dæmonia, subtus horrēdum chaos inferni; desuper Iudex & Iratus; foris mundus ardens; intus conscientia urens; Heu miser peccator sic deprehensus quo fugis? Latere enim impossibile apparere intollerabile.*
Anselm: de mundi similitud.
* Joel 2. 6.
* Revel. 6. 16.

ſhall be vaine, becauſe your life hath been ſo. But let this ſuffice ſhortly to have ſpoken to this third particular [ *How* ] and proceed wee to the

Fourth, [*When*] ought we to conſider our wayes? Sure no Time is, or can be unſeaſonable for a duty of ſuch ſerious import, and univerſall neceſſity; yet there are ſome ſpeciall times, when the practice of it is eſpecially requiſite. No time but calls for it; but ſome that call aloud, and thoſe are;

Firſt, When wee feare ſome heavy and wrathfull diſpenſation from the Lord; And ſurely never

was Age more full of threats; never times more cloudy, & generally overcaſt, then theſe wee now live in are; what the iſſue and event of all will be Heaven only knowes: But when we ſeriouſly weigh, how generall the practice of ſcandalous ſins are, the ſad and frequent falls of ſome once eminent for profeſſion; the ſpirit of Errour and Hereſie gone forth amongſt us; when wee think upon our miſ-improvements of preſent mercies; our unſuitable returnes for former deliverances; our falſenceſſe to our profeſſed ends, and declared intentions; our cleaving

ving to our old lusts; our growing worse and worse after our late bloudy scourge; And withall the sudden removalls and taking downe of such, as were burning *and shining lights in the Church* of GOD, Stewards in his house, and precious dispensers of the great mysteries of salvation: I say, when wee lay all these things together, and addresse our selves with some seriousnesse to reflect upon them; may wee not feare, that the Clouds over us are big with vengeance, ready to be dissolved upon our heads? That the * beesome of destruction is rea-

* Joh. 5. 35. *Usher, Vines, Hall, Whitaker, Gattaker, Blake*, &c.

* Isai. 14. 23.

* Zeph. 2. 2. dy, that the * decree is about to bring forth? why now is a time to consider our wayes, and with populous *Nineveh* * to sit down in sackcloth, humbling our selves, that the event may be the same to us; and that seeing our repentance, the Lord also may * Repent of the evill thought upon, and not do it.

* Jonah 3. 8.

* Jonah 3. 10.

Secondly, When wee feele the hand of the Almighty heavy upon us. And now is that time, while so very many families throughout the Nation, are visited with sickneſse. That which we call the *New Diſeaſe*, seemes as a Messenger from God to call

call us and invite us to this New Worke; New to us, becauſe ſo few of us have been acquainted with it before. The piety of thoſe in ſupreame authority over us, hath given us a ſummons to a ſolemne humiliation, and the ſpeciall worke of ſuch a day, is to examine and ſearch into the many enormities of our lives, and thereupon to arraign and paſſe judgement upon our ſelves before the Lord. Thus did the * people of the Lord beſpeake one another in thoſe ſad and calamitous times; *Let us ſearch and try our Wayes, and turne unto the Lord our God.* In a

* Lam. 3. 40.

day of trouble wee are apt to ſet open every window, and looke abroad to ſee which way helpe may come; all our thoughts are buſied in contriving wayes for ſpeedy ſuccours. * Hoſea 5. 13. *When * Ephraim ſaw his wound, and Judah ſaw his ſickneſſe, then went Ephraim to the Aſſyrian, and ſent to King Jareb:* and this is our too frequent courſe, when alas the plague is in our own hearts; while we look abroad, we are ſtrangers at home, where wee have moſt need to be acquainted; and therefore a proper remedy in the foremention'd caſe is layd downe by the holy Ghoſt, *Eccleſ.*

*Eccles 7. 14. In the day of adversity Consider.* The very source and true fountaine of all our evills, wee carry in our own breasts. In vaine doe wee enquire after peace, while our spirituall * whoredomes doe remaine, while the accursed thing is lodg'd and hug'd in our bosomes; no wonder if the quiet and serenity of our soules be interrupted with a series of trouble; or while sinne *Jonah* like is suffred to * sleep at the bottome, if a storme threaten the vessell. Soule in thy personall disquiets, be not so much employ'd in prying & sneaking after succours

* 2 King. 9. 22.

* Jonah 1. 5.

from the Creature, and without; but let it be your chiefeſt worke, to reflect upon your ſelves, turne your eyes inward, look what *Dagon* is advanced in your ſoules; what Idoll luſt it is, you have pay'd your homage to; what little * Foxes ſpoile the grapes; what * worme is at the roote, that devoures your hearts-eaſe, and makes it wither away like the gourd, which was gone almoſt aſſoone as it began to appeare. Obſerve whence it is that your troubles have their naturall riſe, and here employ your induſtry; weed your ſoules garden; ſtrike at the

* Cant. 2. 15.
* Jonah 4. 7.

the * roots of bitterneſſe springing up. And as in perſonal diſquiets, ſo deale in your domeſticall tryalls. Doth the Lord blow upon your eſtates, and waſt them with a ſecret curſe, and inviſible Conſumption; as in *Haggai* 1. 6. *You have ſowen much, and bring in little; ye eate, but you have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drinke; and he that earneth wages, putteth it into a bag with holes.* Now what is herein to be done, wee are told in the very words of the text redoubled verſe the 7th, *Therefore Conſider your Wayes.* So that if the Lord ſmite

* Heb. 12. 15.

your families with ſickneſſe and diſeaſes; ſpoyle you of Relations; blaſt your hopes; fruſtrate your expectations; cauſe you to meet with bitterneſſe in friends, ſtrangeneſſe in kindred; ill ſucceſſe in your undertakings, whatever it is that ſerves to make you up a condition of Adverſity; a ſhort but excellent preſcription of what you have to doe, you find in that one word, *Conſider.*

Thirdly, When wee would obtaine ſome ſpeciall bleſſing, ſome ſignall favour; ſuch a time as this doth call aloud, for the practiſe of this duty. Our ini-

iniquities are they that keep good things at a diſtance from us; *for they* [f] *ſeperate betwixt us and* [*] *our God.* While we walk on in a way of ſinne and rebellion againſt him, wee cannot expect to find him in a way of eminent mercies towards us. While we doe deliberately, ſhake off our duty, and wilfully forget our profeſſed Allegiance, it cannot rationally enter our thoughts, that God ſhould cheriſh us as ſubjects, or deale to us the bread of children; but our own hearts, will doubtleſs prompt us rather to conclude, his Juſtice ſhould plague us, and the vengeance

[f] Peccata elongant nos non loco, ſed voluntate.

[*] Iſa. 59. 2.

ance of his right arme overtake us as Traytors. While the gates are shut, lock'd and barr'd, while the roomes are fill'd, and prepossest'd with enemies within, how shall the King *of Glory have entrance? while sinfull stirrings are endeared, how should the sacred motions of the Spirit have audience, or the sweet consolations of the Comforter be admitted? Therefore if wee would be scituate in the enjoyment of mercies, temporall or spirituall; if wee would be the subjects of God Almighty his bounty; and so priviledged with blessings both of the right,

* Psal. 24. 9.

right, and left hand, the moſt compendious way to the obtaining both, is to hearken to Gods Councel, whereof this in the Text is a ſpeciall part; *Oh that my people had hearkned unto mee, and Iſrael had walked in my wayes: I ſhould ſoone have ſubdued their enemies, and turned my hand upon their Adverſaries.* If *Iſrael* had been ſo much their own friends, as to have conſidered their Wayes, and walked in Gods; they ſhould have had no enemies, or at leaſt but ſubdued ones. God himſelfe would have ſtruck in their quarrell, and with his hand armed with thunder, have dealt

dealt death to their adversaries. Yea not a ſtarre in heaven * but ſhould have been a weapon againſt *Iſraels* foes (as once againſt *Siſera*) or at leaſt a funerall taper to light them to their coffins. But is the ſubjugation of enemies the faireſt advantage, ſuch ſhall reape, as are faithfull in the diſcharge of the forementioned duty: or ſhould they not ſoone ſee if the Lord would not open the windowes of heaven, and powre them out a bleſſing, that there ſhould not be * roome enough to receive it? Surely if the Lord rained downe riches, honour, and long life upon

* Judg. 5. 20.

* Mal. 3. 10.

* *Solo-*

*Solomon*, becauſe he asked the thing that pleaſed him; he will not faile us with a large overplus of all theſe in their ſweeteſt ſignification; while it is the unfaigned deſire of our hearts to do the things that pleaſe him. In a word, wee have long been in expectation of a generall and bleſſed Reformation; and we have ſometimes thought the Embryo hath been neare to midwiving into the world; but how have our longing eyes failed with waiting; how have our tympanied hopes miſcarried? For wee expected ſo choice a mercy to be preſented to us upon the point

* 2 Chro. 1. 12.

point of a ſword; or to ſaile toward us upon a Sea of purple gore: But if at laſt, each of us would ſee to the cleanſing of the corrupted corners of our own hearts; how ſoone would our wiſhes be crowned with a deſired ſucceſſe?

Fourthly, When others are generally inconſiderate of their Wayes, Then it is a time to Conſider ours. To this the bleſſed Apoſtle *Paul* exhorts us, *Eph.* 5. 16. *Walke circumſpectly, not as fooles but as wiſe, Redeeming the time*; and why? what reaſon is brought to beare up the weight of ſuch an exhortation? It follows, *becauſe the*

*the dayes are evill.* When the dayes are evill be you good; when the moſt like fooles are prodigall in the expence of precious minutes, let it be your wiſdome to redeem the time: when others walke looſely and at large; careleſſe and negligent, walke you circumſpectly, accurately, exactly, to the very top and apex of Chriſtianity; for ſuch ſignifications critticks obſerve in the word, ſomewhat like to the forecited place you have from the ſame Apoſtle, in 2 *Tim.* 2. 4, 5. *Preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long ſuffring*

*and*

*and doctrine.* Why? *For the time will come, they will not endure ſound doctrine, and will turne away their eares from the truth, and be turned unto fables, but watch thou in all things,* &c. The evill of time, even foreſeene and at a diſtance, ſhould incite the Miniſters of the Word, to the preſent doubling of their diligence. Brethren, then when others nauſeate the Meſſage and Meſſengers of Chriſt; then when others apoſtatize and fall back from the truth received; let the negligence of them in their duties, ſpurre you up to diligence in yours; when the love of

of others waxes * cold; then let yours flame, and like the fire burne hotteſt in the dead of Winter. When others runne into exceſſe of riot, * and that with greedineſſe, let them think it ſtrange, that you joyn not with them in that ſinfull carreir. Then when others (like the *Melchites* in *Nicephorus*) are reſolved their Religion ſhall ever keep touch with the times, or when poſſibly ſome of your familiars, are trapan'd into ſinfull compliances, by the glittering proffers of worldly greatneſſe; let your virgin ſoules be very ſtrangers to ſuch debauches, while you are conten-

* Matth. 24. 12.

* 1 Pet. 4. 4.

g *Erasm. in præf. operibus.*

tented with g *Origen* to keep a good Conscience, though that keep you from the Court. That good man thought his place of a poore Catechist in *Alexandria*, to be preferrable to the infamous honours of his fellow-pupill *Plotinus*; becauſe in that inferiour ſtation he had preſerved his innocence, while the other had loſt his in the Court. Sure profeſſion never lookes more lovely, then when profeſſours walke cloſely in a time of generall looſeneſſe. What a Commendation was it for *Lot* to be righteous in *Sodome? Obadiah* in the Court of *Ahab*, and

and for *Noah* to be a perfect man in his generation; when the world was growne so foule, that a deluge of water might drowne it, before it could cleanse it: If ever there was Phœnix in *Arabia*, it was *Job*; and sure fame will forget the *Cæsars* to remember the name of [h] *Athanasius*, who duell'd with the world, in a cause glorious as the world could yield. What need I instance in more examples, or stay to tell you of Saints, even in *Neroes* houshold, *or of *Timothies* Temperance amongst the

[h] *Ingemuit orbis & mirabatur se factum esse Arrianum, at iste vir vel totius orbis impetum sustinuit, qui maluit mutare sedem quam vel syllabam veritatis.*

* Phil. 4. 22.

* *Evhe-*

* 1 Tim. 5. 23.

*Ephesians*, who once came not behind the rest of *Asia* in their luxury; especially if it be true which I have some where read, that according to the [i] Law they banished *Hermodorus*, because he had the reputation of an honest and temperate man. Two famous Scriptures are those, and which may be to us instead of all examples. The first is, *Mal.* 3 16. Then when men called the proud happy, and said, *it was in vaine for them to serve the Lord*, then in those evill dayes, saith the Text, *They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and a book of Remembrance*

[i] Μηδεὶς ἡμῶν ὀνησίστρατος ἔστω.

was

*was writ.* The Lord took so kindly that exemplary piety, that himselfe was pleased to take care, that the names of those gallant persons should be registred in the highest Records of honour. The other Scripture is, *Revel.*2.13. In that Eulogium given to the Church of *Pergamus*; *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satans seate is; and that thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denyed my faith; even in those dayes, wherein Antipas my faithfull Martyr was slain among you.* To professe even there where satan held the chaire; To hold fast the

the name of Christ, when *Antipas* had shed his blood for so doing; not to deny the faith there, where it had been but lately death to own it, this was right Christianity indeed.

Fifthly, A speciall time wherein we are to Consider our Wayes is [ *Now* ] which since we find in the Text, we have the more reason to remember. *To day if ye will heare his voice* (saith the *Apostle) *harden not your hearts*; the gales of grace are very uncertaine, and therefore the present is the most fit season for the discharge of duty. When one presented *Antipater* with a Treatise

* Heb. 4. 7.

tise of happinesse; he returnes it with * *I am not at leisure* When another gave *Archias* the Theban a list of the Conspiratours against his life, he puts it up with *In crastinum seria.* This is our very mode and manner, when God calls us Now to consider, how apt are wee to extend his Now, unto the morrow at least; though the present day may be our last, and delay prove our ruine. For possibly opportunities of grace may be taken from us, or if not so, yet wee from them. In warre many times there is no place for a second over-sight, because the day

* ἐχολάζω.

*In prælio non licet bis peccare.*

is loſt by the firſt : ſo it may be many of us, ſhall not have the opportunity of giving the grace of God a double refuſall. *Oh *that thou hadſt knowne in this thy day* (ſayth our Saviour weeping over *Jeruſalem*) *the things that belong unto thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.* Thus have wee ſpoken to this fourth particular [*When*] wee are to conſider our wayes; The Reaſons Why are;

* Luke 19.42.

Firſt, Becauſe God conſiders our Wayes. The Pſalmiſt inſtructs us in this Doctrine, *Pſal.*33. 13,15. *The Lord looketh from heaven, he beholdeth all the ſons of*

*of men, he faſhioneth their hearts alike, he Conſidereth all their worke.* We cannot walke in a path ſo private, ſo darke and benighted with ſable clouds, but wee are under the eye of the Almighty. If our converſation be filthy, we cannot with the *Sepia* ſo ſtirre the mudd, but that the eye * of GOD will deſcry us in the very midſt of that mire. The Lord hath the key of our moſt inward retirements; and though through the pretences we make, the vizzards wee weare, the diſguiſes we put on; wee may poſſibly delude and impoſe upon the moſt diſcerning ſpirits of

* *Prope eſt ad te Deus, tecum eſt, intus eſt, ſacrintra nos ſpiritus ſedet, malorum bonorũq; noſtrorum obſervator & eultos.* Sen: Epiſt. 41.

such as we converse with-all; yet heaven hath us at a full view. Or though by our subtill reserves, wee may keep much of our little world (our selves) as *incognita* to the discoveries of men; yet those endeavoured concealements cannot blind the knowledge of him; who must needs know us all, because he made us all out of nothing. *Empedocles*[k] and the *Ægyptians*[l] in their *Hieroglyphicks* represent God as a Circle, whose Center is every where, and the Circūference no where. Therefore the Prophet

[k] *Deus sphæra est cujus centrū ubiq; ; peripheria, id est linea suo circumflexu orbem ambiens, nusquam est.*

[l] *Jamblicus lib. de Ægyptiorū mysteriis.*

* *Da-*

*David, Whither ſhall I goe from thy preſence? If I take the wings of the morning, and fly into the uttermoſt parts of the Sea, thou art there; If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there: If I ſay Darkneſſe ſhall cover mee; even the Night ſhall be a Light round about mee.* The parts of a diſſected body cannot lye ſo open to the view of a skilfull Anatomiſt, as our thoughts and wayes to him, before whom * every creature is naked and open and manifeſt. Now if the preſence of a *Cato* could fright *Romes* vicious youth into a ſemblance of vertue; If diſſolute *Alcibia-*

* Pſ. 139. 7, 11, 12.

* Heb. 4. 13.

des * durſt not riot it, under *Socrates* his eye; If the very picture [m] of *Mulcaſter* hung up in the ſtudy, could provoke famous *Whitaker* to his utmoſt induſtry there; or if according to the [n] Poet, we ought to reverence our ſelves, and feare the obſervance of a child, when we are about to act what is unſeemly: what a Religious dread, ſhould wee have of the Majeſty of Heaven, and of thoſe pure Eyes, which cannot endure iniquity. Sure I am, the Lord complaines of, and blames us for our ſottiſh ſecurity and inconſiderateneſſe; that if we will not conſi-

der

* *Plutarch* in the life of *Alcibiades.*

[m] Mr. *Fuller.*

[n] *Turpe quid acturus te ſine teſte time; Maxima debetur, puero Reverentia ſiquid Turpe paras——*

der our own Wayes; that yet at leaſt wee will not conſider that hee doth Conſider them? They * Conſider not in their hearts, that I conſider all their wickedneſſes, and that they are before my face. He cannot but wonder, that we ſhould forget what he doth Remember, eſpecially, when he would forget, if wee would Remember as we ought; or that what is before his face, we ſhould caſt behind our backs, as if that was not worth our notice, which will put us under his wrath. If then our Wayes be conſidered by him, who reared us out of

* Hoſea 7. 2.

duſt, and is able when he pleaſes to frowne us into it againe; before whoſe tribunall all fleſh ſhall one day indifferently ſtand, the reſpects of birth and dignities in the world layd aſide: Sure we ſhould own it as reaſon ſufficient, to cauſe us to ſtay a while, and peruſe ſome few lines in the volume of our ſelvs; to ſuffer our ſoules to Reflect upō their own wayes, leaſt for want of that reflexion they ſuffer for their Wayes. Conſider becauſe God Conſiders.

The ſecond Reaſon is, Becauſe Satan conſiders your Wayes. When the LORD had propounded,

* *Haſt*

* *Hast thou Considered my servant Job?* By the answer Satan makes to that Question, It is very easie to collect, that *Job* was no stranger to his observance. He could familiarly discourse, what disbursements the bounty of heaven had made in favour of him; he could repeate memoriter, the whole Catalogue of those mercies *Job* had receiv'd: And could remember the Lord, how he had set a hedge about him, and had seated him in a confluence of created comforts. For what is storyed of one *Drake* alone, amongst the rest of men, that he did once compasse the earth;

* Job 1. 8.

is the perpetuall busines
* Job 2. 2. of this great * Dragon;
and that not only to discover, but also to devoure.
* 1 Pet. 5. 8. *He goes * about like a roaring Lion, hunting for his prey*; he walkes to and fro, to see what silly soules, are tangled in the snares and toiles which he hath pitch'd. He is never so Idle, but he is Considering both Persons and Actions, whom and where he may endanger. The Temperament, * Composure, and

* *Quædã qualitates morum sunt certis vitijs vicinæ: mores enim asperi aut crudelitati aut superbiæ solent esse conjuncti. Blandi autem mores, & paulò amplius quam decet lætiores nonnunquã luxuriæ & dissolutioni conjuncti: Intuetur ergo inimicus humani generis unumcujusq; mores, cui vitio sunt propinqui: & illa ponit ante faciem, ad quæ cognoscit facilius inclinari mentem.* Greg: Moral: lib. 14.

naturall

naturall inclinations of mens bodies, lye more open to his view, then to the knowledge of the moſt exquiſite and ſagacious Phyſitian. He can interpret the ſilent language of a bluſh; he can ſhrewdly gueſſe at the true originall of a ſigh; from what corner that wind blowes; or if the teares look out at the eyes, he is not farre to ſeek for a Reaſon, what it is, that pumps up that water thither. By the diſturbances in our ſleep, by thoſe various agitations whereby wee doe almoſt render our dreames intelligible; he is able to make very neare conjectures, what

what kind of baites may probably take us, when wee are broadeſt awake. He is a critticall overſeer of our prayers, diſcourſes, and of the very ſcene of our carriage when wee are preſent in ordinances; and howſoever (for a while) he may ſuffer us to reſt in ſecurity, yet doubtleſſe he will remember us of our ſins; poſſibly, when wee ſhall begin to look towards God, and to be weary of that ſpirituall bondage in which he hath long detained us; or at leaſt, if not when wee are about to leave him, yet when wee are about to leave the world. He will ſtuffe our death-

death beds with thornes, and fill our ſoules with the ſorrowfull Remembrance of our former miſ-ſpent dayes: From our abuſe of creatures, neglect of duties, deafeneſſe to tenders of grace, incorrigibleneſſe under threats, Reproofes, Judgements: From our waſtfull expence of precious time, breach of holy reſolutions and vowes of better obedience, outragious wickedneſſe and rebellion: I ſay from ſuch heads as theſe, he will at that day draw arguments, that may help us to conclude againſt our ſelves, that we are loſt for ever, and that our life and our * hope is periſhed

* Pro. 11. from 7.

from the Lord. And if he shall not hereby be able, to affright and drive us into despaire, or spoile us of our Comforts, yet the sense and feeling of them will be much allay'd and abated.

Now if any of us doubt whether the knowledge of this our * adversary extend so farre; or whether knowing so much, he will make use of a thing so good to an end so bad; As the remembrãce that he is a spirit in respect of his essence; and the very long time he hath had for his practise and experience, will instruct us in the

* *Dæmones triplici acumine præscientiæ vigent, viz: sublimitate naturæ; experientiâ Temporum; & revelatione superiorum potestatum.* Isidor. de summo bono. lib. 1.

the former: So the consideration that he is a spirit fallen from a very high degree of eminency, to the lowest ebbe of misery; and that he is fraught with a spightfull * malice against the Glory of his Creatour, will helpe us to conclude the latter.

* *Dic mihi, cur tantis odijs nos perfidus hostis*
*Exigitat, bellis tam gravibusq; petit?*
*Causam odij, tantiq; cupis cognoscere belli?*
*Hoc odio summi Numinis ipse facit.*
*Ut siquis Regem nequeat cum lædere, Regis*
*Arreptam statuam dente manuq; petat.*
Jacob: Billius.

Thirdly, Consider, because wicked men Consider your wayes. *The *wicked watcheth* (the latine translation is, *considers*) *the Righteous*. As the servants of

* Psa 37. 32.

of *Benhadad*, watched, and as it were hung upon the lips of the King of *Israel*, ever waiting when a word would fall thence, which they might construe in favour of their Master. With the same diligence, though with a designe abundantly worse, the holy * Prophet complaines his very familiars watched for his halting. Glad would the wicked be, to see a good man slip, and rejoyce they have found an occasion to sharpen their reproaches against him. Yea though there be no visible sores for such flesh-flyes to fasten upon; yet with *Cæsar*, what they do not find, they

* Jer 20 10.

*Aut viam inveniam aut faciam.*

they will endeavour to make; * *Report, ſay they, and we will Report it*; being in hopes that if they have but the confidence ſtoutly to ſlander, ſomething will ſtick, which if it cannot quite overthrow the credit of the Righteous in the opinions of others, may yet ſerve to bring his Innocence into ſuſpition. Yet is not this all, for the reproaches which ſeeme directed againſt his perſon, are alſo aim'd at his profeſſion; and Religion it ſelfe is ſtabd at through the ſides of him, who is the untaigned obſerver of it. The ſpotleſſe and virgin life of our

* Jer 20 10.

our blessed Saviour himselfe, could not escape the evill eye of the* Pharisees, who sought to find therein, not any thing to reduce them to the same straight evenneſſe, but to traduce him by seeking occasions against him. For the Reason of all, wee may find it in their hate; and for the ground of that (if a golden Truth be not the worse, for being digged from an *Apocrypha* mine) you have it, *Wisd* 2. 13. *Therefore let us ly in wait for the Righteous, because he is not for our turne, he upbraideth us, with our offending the Law, and objecteth to our infamy, the transgressions of our education.*

* Luk. 6. 7.

tion. Becauſe good mens lives are very ſtrangers to theirs, and ſo many ſilent reprovers of their vanities and follies; becauſe their light ſhines ſo clear; therefore the Owles and Batts, & ſuch like birds of night, ſcreitch out their diſlikes both of it and them. Indeed while they ſet their *mouthes againſt the very heavens, wee need not wonder they are opened againſt the Candidates thereof; but the leſſe reaſon they have for their malice, the leſſe need wee matter it; only while they make it their ſtudy to render us odious, let it be ours to preſerve our Innocence; poſſibly

*Pſal. 73. 9.

possibly they may grow, or weary, or ashamed, while they have no matter to work upon, or if they have, wee have the greater reason to look into our selves; and so our very enemies may befriend us; a bitter taunt may prove wholesome physick, and malice it selfe, when it is sanctified, shall performe the office of good will. As the same Speare that wounded *Telephus* was his cure; as he who thought to kill *Jason* the *Thessalian*, with the sword opened his impostume, and instead of intended death, gave him unexpected life; so many times a reproach

from

from an enemy hath cured a disease of the mind, which hath scaped a mans own observance. ° *Acrius calcar ad vitæ correctionem habet hostis exprobatio, quã amici moderata correptio.*

The fourth Reason is; Because the time will come when you will wish you had; * *These things thou didst* (sayth the Lord) *and I kept silence; but I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thee.* Gods silence will not ever last; there will be a time of Reproofe; the line of his patience will not ever be extended; the scene will one day be altered, and fury also will step upon the stage to act its part, and your disorders shall be set in order before you. Now when *Psal 50. 21, 22.

when you shall be able to see the severall squadrons of your sinnes, marching in their ranks, in their proper colours, with their just rewards in the reere: how will you blame your blockish inconsiderateness? *The backslider in heart*, saith the wise man, *shall be filled with his own wayes.* Those wayes wee would not have to fill our heads and thoughts, will one day fill our hearts.

*Pro. 14. 14.

There are foure things which will make the very thoughts of your inconsiderateness to be altogether insupportable to you.

First, When you shall Con-

Consider the blessed condition of such as did timely reflect upõ their wayes, so as to Reforme and amend. *There shall be weeping and wayling, and gnashing of teeth* * (sayth the Evangelist) *when you shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the Kingdome of God, and you your selves thrust out.* There will be weeping with a witnesse, wayling with a very dreadfull Emphasis, when you shall see some from the * East, and some from the West, some of the same City, Towne, Family, seate, some of your intimates sitting in Glory, and you your selves condemned

* Luke 13. 20.

* Matth. 8. 11.

demned to wraſtle with thoſe flames which keep downe the very Devills under them. Ah thoſe bleſſed Manſions, will you then ſay, that had I been wiſe, I might have had the ſame title to! Ah the full feaſt of * fat things, with wine upon the lees, to which I was once an invited gueſt! How doth the Court of Heavens dread King, Eccho with the loud praiſes of Angells and Saints; once I was entreated to make one in the Quire. What a bleſſed liberty, what a full felicity, what an harmonious quiet, what a ſweet peace doe thoſe glorified ſoules enjoy,

* Iſai. 25. 6.

enjoy, of all which when I had a proffer I would have none. When you ſhall perceive with what a liberall hand faithfull endeavours are rewarded, and with what rigours rebellious wretches are purſued, then you will wiſh your ſelves had conſidered.

Secondly, When you ſhall remember for what it was, you made a forfeiture of your ſhare in Glory; then you will wiſh you had timely conſidered it. When you perceive what infinite treaſures you have parted with; how you have ſold an inheritance unſpeakeably great, and yet have nothing in your hands

to ſhew; when you perceive how that all the flattering promiſes, and grandeurs of ſin, end but in a harveſt of ſhame: when you ſee your riches have found * their wings; your pleaſures have bid you adieu; your honours have long agoe deſerted you; Then will you be ready to ſay to ſin as *Cornelius Agrippa* to his familiar, p *Begon unhappy, which haſt for ever undone mee*; or break out with *Lyſimachus*, *Ah for how ſhort lived a pleaſure* q *have I loſt a kingdome?* What a mournfull eye, what a funerall look will you caſt towards thoſe glorious and beautifull

* Pro. 23. 5.

p *Abi perdita beſtia quæ me perdidiſti.*

q *Heu quam exiguâ voluptate regnum perdidi?*

Man-

Mansions of heaven, which you never would believe were worth your seeking, till at parting; and then found they did excell Admiration, and were above all Wonder. Indeed if you had divested your selves of the title to heaven, and all therein, for meere nothing; this wee might call your matchlesse folly, or your unparralelled madnesse; But to part with all the Glories there for stripes, and those also such as will leave their footsteps graven upon the very soule, the smart of every of w^h will last eternity it selfe; For to assigne a name to this, or to expresse it fully

by a Periphraſis, the ripeſt inventions of men are too ſhort, and Ciceronian Eloquence is barren. But

Thirdly, When you ſhall adde to this the utter impoſſibility of recovering to the ſame ſtate, the ſame termes for heaven you once were in: when you ſhall think of the unpaſſible* gulph; when you ſhall feele your condition ſo very bad, that it can be no worſe; yet at the ſame time be ſure it ſhall never be better: This will ſlay your ſoules; this very thought wil viper-like corrode your heart-ſtrings; this ſhall be the worme that will ever gnaw, never dye. This is that

* Luke 16. 26.

that ſtone of *Syſiphus* wch you ſhall be ever rowling in your minds, and which ſhall ever fall back upon you. That Dying life and that living death, which perplexed ſoules are conſtrained to paſſe in the dark Territories of hell; what a ſeaſon, what a reliſh would it have; yes how ſupportable would it be, if it might but leane upon ſome faint and ſtarveling hope. If they were condemned to any dungeon but that of a miſerable eternity; if their acceſſe to heaven was forbid by any other intrenchments then

*--At mens ſibi cõſcia fœlli. Nec videt interea cui terminus eſſe malorum Poſſit; nec quæ ſit pœnarum deniq; finis, Atq; eadem metuit magis*—Lucret. 3.

*Anima illic posita bene esse perdidit, esse non perdidit: Ex quâ re semper cogitur, & ut mortem sine morte, & defectum sine defectu, & finem sine fine patiatur: Quatenus ei & mors immortalis sit, & defectus indeficiens, & finis infinitus.* Greg. Dialog: lib. 4.

that of Impossibility; If amongst all the devils that torment those unhappy creatures, they might be freed from Despaire, much more hideous & frightfull then all the other; If they could but say, *Dabit Deus his quoq; finem*, There will once be an end: It would make them live in the midst of death, burne with the constancy of a *Scævola*; and endure those tortures, with a courage never known at *Sparta*, or an Apathy above the very pre-

cepts

cepts of the Stoicks. But the ſtate of the damned, ſhall be utterly unacquainted with ſuch a tincture of happineſſe. They have wilfully engaged themſelves in the den of the mercileſs *Trophonius*, and thence there are, *Veſtigia nulla retrorſum*, no returnes.

Fourthly, When your obſtinacy hath caſt you there, into the midſt of that hell; you will not meet with the leaſt of pity. The eare of heaven will be deafe to all your cryes, nor will mercy it ſelfe be moved at your diſmall waylings. Though *Abrahams** children, he will not own you; the very beſt o-

*Dux Erebi, populos poſcebat crimina vitæ, Nil hominum miſerans, iratuſq; omnibus umbris.* Stat. Theb. 2.

* Matth. 3. 9.

ratory of the rich glutton, though pointed with sighes, could not beget in *Abrahams* breast the least sense of his piercing heart-rending sorrows, nor procure * so much water as would cleave to the tip of a finger, to allay his tongues intolerable heate. Your friends that (while alive) would have wept you well if sick, whose pittifull hearts would have aked at your least disaster, who have so often joyned themselves as companions in your griefes, and resented your sorrowes as their own, in this your saddest extremity will lend you no compassion. Your tender

* Luk. 16 24.

der & indulgent mothers, who have borne you on their knees, and often given you ſuck, whoſe bowells would have yearned towards you in anguiſh, will then feele no ſuch affections ſtirring. For if they be in heaven, there all teares are wip'd away; and if in hell, they ſhall not find enow to lament their own woes. Saints in heaven ſhall rejoyce at the doome executed, and ſhall ſay, *Loe this is the man* * *that made not God his hope, but truſted in lyes that would not profit him*; yea they ſhall triumph at the glorificatiõ of divine Juſtice, though in the ruine of their neareſt

* Pſal. 52. 7.

carnall relations. Say then, will not the leaſt of theſe things alone, (much more together) (at ſuch a day as wee have before-mentioned) make your ſorrowfull hearts, ſigh out your wiſhes, that you had conſidered? Let me then praile with you while it is yet to day, to hearken to the Lords voice, *Præſtat ſemel quam ſemper*, better once then alwayes, and alwayes to no purpoſe. Doe that freely now, which you ſhall hereafter by neceſſitie. Doe it now on hope, which you ſhall then doe in vaine. This worke is now your duty upon the right performance of wch you

you may expect to find comfort, it will be then your torment, when you shall consider and curse your inconsiderateneſſe.

Laſtly, A Reaſon to enduce us to Conſider is,

Becauſe wee may be deceived. *There is a* * *Way,* * Pro. 14. 12.
ſaith *Solomon, which ſeemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the Wayes of Death.* You may be in a way, of which for the preſent you are well opinioned, which yet upon better ſearch, upon a more ſtrict examinatiõ, you may find to lead to the * *chambers of Death.* * Pro. 7. 27. Did I ſay a Way? or are there not more then one? If we doe con-

*Pro. 21. 2. consult the *Proverbs*, wee shall there find, that *Every way of a man is right in his own eyes; but the Lord ponders the heart.* As if he had said, the Lord knowes to the contrary: selfe is but a partiall Judge, and easily brib'd to pronounce a corrupt sentence in its own cause, though very bad; yet as nothing is more common and familiar, so withall nothing is more dãgerous then self-deceit; especially when this cosenage is cõversant about our Wayes. What a sad thing is it for a poor soule to be journeying to ruine and eternall misery, & yet think he is in the ready way to

felicity ! Verily to conclude, he is arrived to the ſuburbs of heaven, and yet after all his paines, to be found upon the borders of hell. Very deplorable Inſtances there are in Scripture, of men reckoning themſelves ſafe and ſecure, when yet their fate was very neare at hand. The Tragicall overthrow of *Sodome* you may reade, *Gen.* 19. 14, 23, 24. *When the Sunne was riſen upon the earth*, ſaith the Text; a bright and glorious beginning of the day there was, who would have thought it had been *Sodomes* laſt ! who could imagine the Sun and their ruine ſhould riſe

riſe together! or who could look for ſuch a fatall ſhowr of fire and brimſtone in Sun-ſhine. Therefore *Lots* *Gen. 19 14. * Sons-in-law (whiie they ſaw the day begin with ſuch a Comicall preface, and the heavens hung with no funerall ſables) could mock at their fathers predictions as idle, and lend an eare to his moſt ſerious diſcourſes about the matter, as to very impertinencies. In the like ſecurity were the reſt of the Citizens, but while with them in 1 *Theſ.* 5. 3. they were crying, *peace, peace, then behold ſudden deſtruction*; peace in their mouths, when flakes of fire were falling upon their

their heads. The * effeminate *Agag* comes out delicately clad, with *ſurely the bitterneſſe of death is paſt*, when it was juſt arrived. The foole in the * Goſpel promiſed himſelfe many dayes, when yet he had not a * night to live. Theſe are Tragicall ſtories, but ſhall I tell you of perſons deceived in the very caſe in hand? who thought ſure of heaven, and yet fell ſhort? That of the Evangeliſt, *Matth.* 25.11. is remarkable to this purpoſe, *Then came the other Virgins, and ſayd, Lord, Lord, open to us, but he ſayd, verily I ſay unto you, I know you not.* Alas they expected entrance, & that doubt-

* 1 Sam. 15.32.

* Luk. 12. 19.

* Luk. 12. 20.

doubtleſſe upon fairer grounds then many of us are able to plead. They had
* Matth. 25. 3. * Lamps, which wee may conceive to be ſomewhat which make a ſhine, profeſſion, excellent gifts, morall vertues, Church-fellowſhip, they went with
* Matth. 25. 7. the * wiſe, with the ſame deſigne to meet Chriſt, were confident of Admiſſion, cry out, *Lord, Lord, open to us*, as if wrong'd to be kept out ſo long, as if the doore muſt needs flye open upon the firſt notice of who was there. Yet were they denyed, they could not enter, Chriſt knew them not, they were utterly deceived, and that in

in respect of their finall estate & condition. So dangerous it is to have too great a Confidence that wee are in the Right Way, that many times it is the chiefest meanes to keep us in the Wrong.

Another Text there is in the same Evangelist which beares a neare resemblance to the former. *Matth.* 7.22, 23. *Many will say to mee in that day, Lord, Lord, have wee not propheſied in thy name, and in thy name caſt out devills, and in thy name don many wonderfull works: And then will I profeſſe to them, I never knew you, Depart from mee ye workers of iniquity.* See here what kind

[r] *Multi potuiſſent ad ſapientiam pervenire, niſi ſe putâſſet jam perveniſſe.* Sen. de Tranq. c. 1.

kind of men were sadly deceived in respect of their eternall welfare. Excellent preachers, foretellers of future events, workers of miracles; such as cast out devills, men of exquisite parts, of inlightned apprehensions, profound judgements, eminent in the eye of the world, famous in their Countrys, admir'd in the sight of all that knew them; men, who (as it appeares) were no strangers to the name of Christ; yet such when they shall plead their acquaintance; when they come to knock at the gate, shall be sent away ashamed, and that claime they judge so plausible,

will

will be cast out, and not admitted in Court. Beloved, what think you? If the very Masters of wit & eloquence, the miracles & prodigies of learning; if men so fairely endow'd with the choicest excellencies of nature, and those also heightened & refin'd by industry, may miscarry; methinks we should think all the eyes wee have too few to cast upō our wayes; and the most stayd and deliberate of all the thoughts wee spend upon them, as reflections too short and fugitive, for what will everlastingly concerne us.

Then let each of us, addresse our selves with all the

*Sapientissimus ille qui ipse consulat, quid in rem sit; proximus in sapientiæ stadio est is, qui bene monenti obediat; at qui nec ipse consulere, nec alteri parere sciat; illum esse vel extremi ingenij necesse est.*

the seriousnesse that may be, to deduce into our practice, what wee have heard represented as our duty. And since Youth and Age are herein equally concerned; give mee leave in a few words to be a Remembrancer to both.

First, Young men, Consider your Wayes. Possibly you will say, you are now in your flourishing prime; the active blood-flowes freely in your azure veins, your spirits are quick and lively; That you may yet send many jolly dayes after their flying predecessours, and crowne your selves

ſelves with Roſe-buds; that you have yet time enough before you, that when the leaden dulneſſe of Age hath ſeiſ'd you, when the diſtempers incident to ſuch ſapleſs yeares have cramp'd your preſent activity, then will be a fitter time, to entertain your ſelves with ſuch a melancholly retirement.

But have you not ſeene the Roſes crop'd while yet in the bud? Doe not as many tender bloſſomes fall from the tree as ripe Apples? Have you not ſeene even Infants interr'd, and layd in their little ſepulchres? Doth not the Impartiall hand of Death attach

tach ſome with their breſt
* Job 21. 24. full of * milk, and their bones full of marrow? The life of man hangs upon very tender filaments; and a thouſand accidents there are, none of which the wiſeſt among all the ſons of Wiſdome are able to foreſee, much leſſe to ſecure themſelves againſt. While wee reade of a *Diagoras* ſtifled with laughter; an *Herrennus* kill'd with feare; a *Plautinus* ſtrangled with griefe; and a [t] *Sylla* choa-

[t] *Ardens indignatione atq; immoderato vocis impetu, convulſo pectore ſpiritum cruore, & minis miſtum evomuit.* Val: Max: lib. 9. c 3.

Shame kill'd *Diadorus*, and the mother of *Secundus* the Philoſopher dyed with exceſſive bluſhing: ſuch a fraile poſſeſſion is life, ſuch a flower that requires not rude and high winds, but falls in the very whiſpers & blandiſhments

ed with Anger; what paſ-
ion is there but may be
mortall to us? While wee
urne over the volumes of
Hiſtory, and there meet
with an *Adrian* choak'd
with a flye; *Fabius* with a
hayre; *Tarquinius Priſcus*
with the bone of a fiſh;
*Anacreon* the Poet with
the ſtone of a Rayſin: or
heate *Seneca* ſpeaking, *Sunt*
*quos ſaliva craſſior male*
*lapſa per fauces ſubitò ſtran-*
*gulaverit*, their own ſpittle
hath ended them: what is
there left *in rerum naturâ*
in the whole Circumfe-
rence of this wide world,
ſo feeble and contempti-
ble, but may be as fatall to
us

us as if the poles ſhould crack, & the world it ſelfe ſhould bury us under its ruines. Therefore *Solomon*,

* Pro. 27. 1. * *Boaſt not thy ſelfe of the morrow, for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth.* Little, very little doe wee know, what births the womb of time may be pregnant with; or of what events a few houres may be delivered. And while we may not boaſt of a day; ſhall we promiſe our ſelves yeares? while wee cannot diſpoſe of an houre, ſhall wee groundleſly conclude our dayes ſhall be ſpun out to old Age? Or tell mee frantick youth, is faith unfaigned, and true repentance,

tance, things that grow within your own inclosures? Can you then determine the time, wherein you will believe & repent, and withall be sure to find acceptance? May you consume the blossome of your dayes, in the drudgeries of sin and Satan, and reserve the bran and dregs for the service of God; and yet compell him therewithall to be satisfied? Shall the strength of your parts and spirits, the very best of your time, be spent in a riotous and vaine course, and only a sinfull, loathsome, unsavoury carcasse be turned over to the care of God? Think withall how

many thouſand ſouls have miſcarried upon the very ſame account; while they have remitted their repentance to a further date, death hath interpoſed and put a period to their dayes; while they have been hovering betwixt their Reſolves, and the execution of them, they have been ſnatch'd away, & the place of their habitation knows them no more. It is but too frequent for the moſt of men, to deale in their lives as *Tully* with his Orations, *Quod primum eſt dicendum id poſtremum ſoleo cogitare*, to deferre that to the laſt which ſhould be don firſt; But let it be our wiſdome

to

to be wiſe in this our day, to know the things that belong to our peace, for they may be hid from our eyes before the next. *Sueton:in vitâ Domitiani in fine.* *Suetonius* tells of a bird which a little before *Trajans* coming to the Empire ſat upon the *Capitoll*, & from thence in the audience of very many *Romans*, did diſtinctly and aloud pronounce theſe words in Greek; ἐγὼ πάντα κελεύω. To all ſuch yong men as ſhall conſcionably ſet about the practiſe of this holy and neceſſary duty, the word of God it ſelfe ſhall be inſtead of ſuch a bird, and as often as you lay it before you, it ſhall preſent you, with either a

pardon of ſin, or a promiſe of life, or a word of Comfort to your ſoules. Let young men Conſider.

Secondly, And ſuch alſo as are ancient. It is a conſiderable time, ſince you came to act your parts upō the Theater of the world: now you are beckened to the retyring roome. Time hath already ſnowed upon your heads, and tells you what weather you may expect. Your wrinkled faces, trembling joynts, hoary heads, and dim eyes, are ſo many preſages that your laſt ſands are in the glaſſe of time; and that as fruit fully ripe, you are now falling into the cold lap of your

your mother earth. A breath or two & you have breath'd your laſt, the wormes are inviting each other to their expected repaſt, and the languiſhing ſtroakes of your feeble pulſe, doe toll you to the grave. You have been a long while as travellers in the way, It is now high time to bethink your ſelvs whither you are going. Now then Conſider, or preſently you are paſt it, and all the benefit of it. For if the life of man is but as a * *vapour which appeareth for a little while, and ſoone vaniſheth away*; If according to the * Prophet, *man in his very beſt eſtate is*

* James 4. 14.

* Pſal. 39. 5.

*but altogether vanity*; or if in our very faireſt flouriſh, we are but puffes of dying breath, meaſured ſpannes of flitting time: By what name ſhall we call that life which is entred upon its laſt ſcene, or what title ſhall wee aſſigne to him, who is ſcarce at a greater diſtãce from his *Exit*, then the bare time to pronoũce it. Yet for thoſe few moments you are to hold up a being in this world, let it be your ſtudy to lay out for a better being in the next. Husband well the poore remainders of that ſtock of time, almoſt the All of w^ch you have prodigally caſt away. Trim the

Lamp

Lamp while yet it burnes, that if it be possible, what hath hitherto lent but a dim and lanquid light, may finish and expire in a more glorious & brighter blaze. That if you cannot say with *Seneca*; *It hath been my care before* [u] *Age to live well, in Age to dye well*, yet while you live let your cares extend to both; Doe the work, though you have slipt the exactest season; & by a circumspect walk, so redeeme the time, you before trifled away, that in that little which is left, such seeds may be sowne, as from thence, through divine blessing upon your endeavours, a joyous and

[u] *Recte cui avi ante senectutem ut benevivere-rem; in senectute ut bene moriar.*

happy eternity may arise.

Nor let it be a shamefull thing in the eyes of any, for the oldest non-proficient, to begin to learne in his age; For if the Roman * *Cato*, though farre step'd in yeares did not yet think it too late to learne the Greek tongue; If the aged Emperour did not blush to goe and fetch x Philosophy from the house of *Sextius*; or if *David Chytræus* when he lay a dying, lift up himselfe to heare the discourses of his friends; professing he should dye with more satisfaction, if he should dye learning some-

* *Cicero de senect: in prefat:*

x *Marcus Antoninus dicens.* Καλὸν καὶ γηράσκοντι τὸ μανθάνειν.

*Ego scnex a Juvenc, & Episcopus tot annorum a collegâ, nec dum annicuto paratus sum doceri.* August. apud Gratian. c. 24 q. 3.

what:

what: Then ſure we need not put our ſelves to the trouble, of ſeeking Refuge in excuſes, for our beginning to addict our ſelves to the ſtudy of the beſt things (ſo very juſtifiable in thẽſelves) but rather ſentence that ſlackneſſe of ours as inexcuſable, whence it was that we did not begin before. The man that hath paſſ'd his dayes in the moſt ridiculous follyes, or in ſuch a madneſſe as is not to be parraleld in *Bedlam*: if at the laſt he grow ſerious & wiſe, he bluſhes not that he is returned to himſelfe, but he is aſhamed it was no ſooner; he is not troubled to conſider what

he is, but what he was; ſuch a madneſſe and ſuch a folly is a courſe of ſin, and if by a ſerious diſcourſe with our ſelves, and a cleare ſight (by the glaſſe of the word) of thoſe impertinencies we are engaged in, we come to amend & reform; all that the world can object is that our Reformation beares not a more ancient date: But there is a Jubilee in heaven at the converſion of a ſinner; and by how much the older he is, by ſo much the more high doe thoſe joyes ſwell; nor ſhall there be a remembrance of the tranſgreſſions of his youth, upon his repentance in Age.

It

It may possibly be of use to some, to have a discovery made to them, of some things, through wch, it many times comes to passe, that men are most heedlesse & inconsiderate of their wayes: And for the sake of such, with a few words about it, wee will shut up the whole Discourse. That wee are then very heedlesly walking comes to passe,

First, Through our unworthy constructions, and improvements of GODS patience and forbearance. The right use, and end of which, is * *to leade us unto repentance:* But observe the generall use the wicked in the

* Rom. 2. 4.

the world make of it. *Because* * *ſentence againſt an evill work is not executed ſpeedily; therefore the heart of the ſons of men, is fully ſet in them to doe evill.* Becauſe the ſwearers tongue, doth not rot in his mouth; becauſe the drunkards arm doth not wither and drop from his ſhoulders, when he is heaving the frothy bowles to his mouth; becauſe the ſpeare of ſome * *Phineas* doth not peirce the heart of the adulterers (as once *Zimri* and *Cosbi*) in the midſt of their unlawfull embraces; becauſe the oppreſſours, the profane mockers at the word, the drowſie ſleepers under it,

* Eccleſ. 8. 11.

* Numb. 25. 7, 8

it, are not presently thunderstruck, or blasted with lightening from heaven; hence it is that men are so bold, to dare the indulging themselves in their sinnes. But if every time wee are at defiance with Heaven, a stone from the * Sling should strike into our foreheads, as once into *Goliahs:* If when men are priding themselves in their parts and abilities, robbing God of his Glory, arrogating to themselves, what is only his due; the wormes should assault them, and become the living Sepulchres of their sinfull carcasses, as once of * *Herods:* If every time wee approach the

* 1 Sam. 17. 49.

* Act 12. 23.

Word

Word and Sacraments, in wrath, malice, and prejudice, (which is the offring with falſe fire) a burning ſhould be kindled upon us, as on *Nadab* and * *Abihu*; or if when wee are acting croſſe to any of the commands of God, wee ſhould immediately undergoe the tranſformation of * *Lots* wife into a pillar of ſalt; This would be a warning to others, and men would be ſomewhat ſhy of ſinne, when they ſhould underſtand it was nothing elſe, but the way of preſent ruine, and making court to their immediate deſtruction. But becauſe the Lord is ſlow to anger, and of great

* Levit. 10 7.

*Gen 19 26.

great compassion, *Pharaoh* dare say, *Who is the Lord? I know not the Lord, neither will I let his people goe.* Because he doth not willingly afflict the children of men, therefore they say, *Tush, the Lord shall not see, neither doth the God of Jacob regard.* Because he was silent; therefore that wicked one, *Psal.* 50. 21. concluded *him to be altogether such a one as himself.* Because the gracious Lord in the administrations of his wrath, & the powring out of his vialls, moves but with a slow pace, and makes so many pauses (as *Psal.* 7. 11, 12, 13. *He whets his sword, he bends his bow, he makes ready his ar-*

* Exod. 5. 2.

* Psal. 94. 7.

*arrowes*; *he prepares the instruments of death*; but ſtill between each of theſe, hath a tender regard to the turn of any ſinner) therefore are we apt to flatter our ſelves, that he will never ſtrike. But if in the temper of our ſouls, we had the leaſt mixture of ingenuity, we ſhould haſt to the embraces of thoſe armes which have bin ſo long ſtretched forth; we would not put that patience to a further tryall, whereof wee have already had ſuch eminent proofes; nor give the leaſt admittance to ſuch a curſed principle; *As to ſin that grace might abound.*

Secondly, Becauſe the paines

paines of Resisting Satan, & grappling with corruption, are so harsh and unpleasant to flesh and blood. Men are so weary of watching the heart, lip, & life, but for an houre or two, that they doe contentedly, give up all care of themselves for the future. The strictnesse and severity of a Christian life, is as strange to them who never layd themselves under any restraint (but gave entertainment to all worldly pleasures in the same order they encountred them) as * Locusts and wild honey, with a rayment of Camells hayre, would be to the rich glutton, whom every day had

* Matth. 3. 4.

had ſeene in Tyrian purple, and the fineſt linnen.

But let us not look at the dirt in the way, ſo much as think upon the pleaſure in ſeeing our friends. Let us not buiſie our thoughts, ſo much, about the ſweate and difficulties of the fight, as the prize, the crowne, the kingdom, the triumph it referres to. The ovations at the victory, will out-weigh the hardſhips of the Campe; the glories obtain'd will ſwallow up the labour and paines uſed in their purſuite. The very extreame pangs in travell, yea and the remembrance of them is loſt, in the Joyes that a man-

man-child is born into the world: a little contemplation of thoſe choice poſſeſſions victory will inſtate us in, will notably ſweeten, what ever of ſoure or bitter wee muſt paſſe thorough to it.

Think with your ſelves, that the enemies you have at preſent to deale with, will not trouble you long; when you dye (*Sampſon*-like) you pull * the houſe upon the *Philiſtines*, your ſinnes; and they are buryed under ſuch ruines, whence they may never hope for a Reſurrection; while at your own riſing from the grave you ſhall be as cleare from the ſpots of ſuch

* Judges 16.30.

such a leprosie, as * *Naaman* was from his, after his bathing in *Jordan*. From that time, you shall have no more unruly passions to curb; no more a hard heart to groane under; no more in such a condition of life, wherein man like to *Issachar*, * bowes under the double burdens of Weaknesse and Want. When * *Elijah* was translated, his cloake fell from him; when *Abram* * went to the mount to sacrifice, his servants were to stay in the plaine: when from the * vall ey of teares, you have a summons to the * mountaines of spices; when from earth (the habitation of moles and

* 2 King. 5. 14.

* Gen. 49. 14.

* 2 King. 2. 13.

* Gen. 22. 5.

* Zech. 12. 11.

* Cant 8. 14.

and piſmires) you are to take your flight for heaven, the bleſſed poſſeſſion of Angels; ſin, and what ever elſe hath been troubleſome to you, ſhall have no power to ſee thoſe Gates, which *no uncleane thing can enter*. Let this thought then ſtrengthen your hands, & ſteele your hearts, with ſuch a courage, as may enable you ſo to manage this ſpirituall warfare, and to fight with the chearefull livelineſſe of thoſe Souldiers, who perceive Victory is lighting upon their Creſts; and the adverſary now ready to fly, will never more be in a capacity to appeare in the field. Se-

* Revel. 21. 27.

Secondly, Think if it be not farre better to fight it out now with courage, then to be for ever condemned to the black dungeon of hell for cowardize; for sure that place of misery, was provided for none, but such as did not dare to be holy: The dismall prison was not founded for any, who mindfull of the Illustrious original of their soules, thought it a stoope too much beneath themselves, to set forth the pompe of the Devills triumph, by yielding themselves his captives. But what think you? Is it not better to wrastle with him in his temptations, then to howle

howle with him in his tortures? Is it not better to oppose him in his suggestions, then to be link'd with him in his chaines, or be the wofull sharers in his sorrowes? Is it not better to encounter him here, though sometimes with teare-bedewed eyes, wee may look upō the maimes and bruises, wee have brought with us, from such an unequall cōgresse) then to be set with him upon an eternall rack, and have our soules fill'd with all sorts of anguish, none of which but are dyed in graine? There are who doe worthily preferre a glorious death in the bed of honour

nour ( while they are ſure their names ſhall ſmell ſweet to poſterity) before a life which they may paſſe in all kind of bravery, if they will fully it with diſhoneſty. And have wee not reaſon to preferre the labours of a fight ( wherein if wee faint not wee are ſure of the victory) before a life, where to live is infinitely more intolerable then to dye as many times, as earth hath ſands, and heaven ſtarres ? I might alſo tell you, that the hardſhips wee doe apprehend in this ſpirituall warfare, will vaniſh by degrees, according to the meaſures, of accuſtoming our ſelves

to

to them. The weight of the Souldiers armour; his ſhort and haſty meales; his courſe lodging upon the ground; his diſturbed and unquiet ſleepes, by cuſtome are rendred very familiar to him; and what at firſt he look'd upon as a burden he ſhould never be able to bear, he now makes his pleaſure; and by his own choice is carryed to that, which nothing but neceſſity could enforce him to doe. You now think it a very weariſome thing to preface every action with Deliberation; to examine every motion from whence it comes, and whither it tends, be-

fore you give it admittance; but if you will but try (and what will it hurt you to try) you will doubtlesse find, that there is not any sensuall pleasure, worthy to be named the same day, with those purer delights, the soule extracts from it selfe, upon its (in part) successefull endeavours to doe the will of God.

To the doing of which, nothing can be more conducible, or necessary, than reflexion upon your past, and consideration of your present, & future actions. Without which you ve at randome; your life a very maze, and labyrith

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of abſurdities, & you ſimply plod into deſtruction. To ſhut up all with one word; Certainly, you had better entertaine conſideration of your wayes now, as a heavenly duty, than hereafter, as a helliſh neceſſity. Or if you pleaſe, you will find it better now, than hereafter to conſider your Wayes. *Now therefore; Thus ſaith the Lord, Conſider your Wayes.*

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FINIS.